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ARISTOCRACY AND JUSTICE

SHELBURNE ESSAYS

NINTH SERIES

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Aristocracy and Justice

SHELBURNE ESSAYS
NINTH SERIES

By Paul Elmer More

"We think that a wise Mean, between these barbarous Extreams, is that which self-Preservation ought to dictate to our Wishes."
— HALIFAX, *The Character of a Trimmer.*

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Most of the essays included in this volume were written for the *Unpopular Review*. Of the two exceptions, one, *The Paradox of Oxford*, appeared in the *School Review*, the other, *Disraeli and Conservatism*, appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly*. I have to thank the editors of these periodicals for their permission to reprint.

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PREFACE

To Henry Holt, Esq.

Dear Holt, — It is fitting that I should dedicate to you these essays on the stress and tragedy of modern times, since most of them were written for the *Unpopular Review* of which you are the editor and informing spirit. How much they have profited by your kindly revision we will keep a secret between us. And I know that you are in general, if not complete, agreement with the ideas here expressed, or they would not have found a place in the magazine which you are conducting for a definite purpose. Only in one matter our correspondence, and more particularly our long talks at the Century in those late hours when other men have gone to their homes in fear for the morrow, have brought out a seemingly radical difference of opinion. How often you have asked me why I showed such hostility to the word evolution! To this question I am trying in this brief preface to give an answer.

In the first place, then, I am not at all hostile to evolution as a scientific law which states the facts of nature. Whether the evidence is sufficient to warrant our belief in the gradual transformation of species through long periods of time from the simplest form of cellular life to the compli-

cated structure of the human body, I do not pretend of myself to decide. Men of science seem to think that we are justified in such a belief, and I am not so foolish as to meddle where I have no business. Nor is my dislike in any way directed against the virile ideas of progress which you derive from your study of Spencer, and which look for progress from the exercise of reason and will. But there is a philosophy commonly associated with evolution in which I hold that the student of literature and life has quite as much right to judge as has the special student of biology. For, as a matter of fact, this philosophy existed long before the discoveries of biology gave precision to the theory of natural development, and is in no wise a necessary deduction from Darwinism and Spencerianism, however much it may fortify itself by an alluring analogy with them. Evolution, in its scientific form, was the outstanding event of the nineteenth century in things of the intellect, and it was inevitable that all the currents of thought of our day, whether for wisdom or for unwisdom, should have looked for their watchword from that triumphant achievement.

What this philosophy is I undertook to set forth in the preceding series of essays, entitled the *Drift of Romanticism*. For it is just that, and nothing more: — a faith in drifting; a belief that things of themselves, by a kind of natural

gravity of goodness in them, move always on and on in the right direction; a confiding trust in human nature as needing no restraint and compression, but rather full liberty to follow its own impulsive desires to expand; an inclination to take sides with the emotions in their rebellion against the inhibitions of judgment. That is not science, nor any proper philosophy of progress; but undoubtedly science, by the law of evolution, has unwittingly, sometimes wittingly, lent authority to this collapse of reason.

And the goal of this drifting? As I read history and see it now making, we have two clear warnings of what the end must be. Just as the sentimental philosophy of the eighteenth century preceded the Napoleonic wars, so our humanitarianism, our feminism, socialism, equalitarianism, pacifism, — all our sentimental isms, are indeed not the direct cause of the present war, but have so prepared the material for it that a slight spark was sufficient to set the whole world aflame with the passions of suspicion, hatred, and revenge, and to arouse in the most scientific land of all a veritable mania of organized brutality. All this is not the end; it is an admonition to reconsider those ideas of justice and discipline and true government which we have so lightly thrust aside for the flattering liberties of the self-styled New Morality. Will the warning be heeded when the peace of exhaustion has come, or shall we

mistake fatigue for wisdom, and so drift on to the utter catastrophe?

But that "dread voice is past." When this book of protest comes to your hands, my dear editor, you will be at Fairholt, where I love to think of you at your brave work, there at the centre of as entrancing a circle of mountain, vale, and lake as the heart of man could desire or the imagination conceive. And recalling the wide glories of that scene, I say to myself that peace and loveliness have not left the world; nor has honourable endeavour disappeared from among men, nor the obstinate hope of better things.

P. E. M.

Princeton, N.J.
May 30, 1915.

CONTENTS

PREFACE vii
NATURAL ARISTOCRACY 1
ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP 39
THE PARADOX OF OXFORD 69
JUSTICE 101
PROPERTY AND LAW 125
DISRAELI AND CONSERVATISM . . . 149
THE NEW MORALITY 191
THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE WAR . . . 219

NATURAL ARISTOCRACY

Aristocracy and Justice

NATURAL ARISTOCRACY

In a certain New York club of authors and scholars, the conversation turned one evening, as it is so accustomed to turn, on the politics of the day; and some astonishment was caused when one of the circle, a distinguished student of sociology well known for his radical opinions, said with emphatic conviction that we were talking of little things, and that the one great question of the day was whether a democratic society could develop a natural aristocracy. By chance I had with me that night an excellent new book on *The Political Philosophy of Burke*, by Professor John MacCunn, late of the University of Liverpool, and as we left the club I showed it to one of my fellow writers, with a word of commendation. "Ah," he said, handing it back unopened, "Burke! he's dead, is he not?" Well, Burke, I dare say, is dead for us, as so many other great memories have perished, and Lord Morley (plain John Morley then, a fairly practical statesman) was indulging in the usual enthusiasm of the biographer when, twenty-five years ago, he closed his luminous volume with the prophecy that "the

historic method, fitting in with certain dominant conceptions in the region of natural science, is bringing men round to a way of looking at society for which Burke's maxims are exactly suited; and it seems probable that he will be more frequently and more seriously referred to within the next twenty years than he has been within the whole of the last eighty." The historic method has an odd way of discrediting the authority of history, and certainly in the lustrum since Lord Morley's predicted score of years the world of Lloyd George and Mr. Roosevelt has not been referring abundantly to Burke's maxims. Yet, with the words of my radical sociological friend in my ears, I could not help reflecting on the coincidence that Professor MacCunn, a writer thoroughly imbued with modern ideas, should have led the whole of Burke's political philosophy up to the same question of natural aristocracy. "For Burke's feet," he says, "were never on surer ground than when, as we have seen, he argued that a civil society, by the very conditions of social struggle and growth, must needs evolve 'a natural aristocracy, without which there is no nation.'" And then, being sufficiently trained in the new historic method, he proceeds to show how Burke entirely missed the real problem of society — as if human nature had first sprung into existence with the Reform Bill.

Of the urgency of the problem a reflective man

will scarcely doubt. The only thing, in fact, that might lead him to question its urgency is its hoary antiquity. Plato wrestled with it when he undertook to outline the ideal republic, and many of his pages on the range of government through its five forms — aristocracy, timocracy, oligarchy, democracy, and tyranny — sound as if he had been reading yesterday's newspapers of London and New York. In the orgy of misrule that brought Athens to humiliation in the last years of the Peloponnesian war he had seen oligarchs and timocrats tearing at each other's throats like mad dogs; he had seen the triumph of the democratic party, and, knowing its instability, he had composed the long dialogue of *The Republic* to show how, if possible, it might be saved from impending tyranny. He wrote, so far as the public was concerned, in a spirit of despair, almost as if foreseeing the domination of an Alexander and the cold despotism of Rome; and in that saddened scepticism he was thinking more of holding up the aristocratic idea of justice for any pious seeker of the future than of creating an actual commonwealth. Yet, however his application of the law of the individual to the machinery of politics may appear at times fantastic, his argument never really gets far from the everlasting questions of government.

The oligarchy which he knew and described was what we should rather call a plutocracy. He

had in mind a State in which, "instead of loving contention and honour [as under a timocracy], men become lovers of money and business, and they praise and admire the rich man, and confer office upon him, but despise the poor man." "And such a State," he adds, "will necessarily be not one but two States, one of the poor, the other of the rich, who are living in the same place and always plotting against each other." And when in such a society the disposers of wealth proceed from privilege to insolence and folly, and on the other side the many have lost the sense of reverence and have become aware of the sheer power of numbers, then the plutocratic State changes to the true democracy, the uncontrolled sway of the majority. The change is like that which comes to a rich young man who, forgetting the discipline of necessity, passes into the libertinism of indulgence. He will hearken to no word of advice; and if any one tells him there is a distinction among pleasures, that some are the satisfaction of gross and ignoble desires and others are the satisfaction of good and useful desires, he shakes his head in superiority, and swears that all pleasures are alike. So the oligarchical faction loses its power and position; and the democracy in its turn follows the same path, despising the constraint of authority and the guidance of experience, caught by the lure of indiscriminate pleasure. "The father comes

down to the level of the son, being afraid of his children, and the son is on a level with his father, having no shame or fear of his parents.... So the schoolmaster fears and flatters his scholars, and the scholars despise their masters and tutors; and, in general, young and old are alike, the young competing with the old in speech and action, and the old men condescending to the young in their gay and easy manners, from dread of being thought morose and dictatorial."

Then arises the problem which confronted the State in Plato's day, as it did in Burke's, and which may not seem entirely irrelevant to the watcher of to-day: How shall the people be saved from themselves? How, indeed? To Plato, who beheld as in a vision the coming of Alexander and Cæsar, the actual historic answer was a gloomy picture of the change from licence to tyranny. His account of the impending fall can never lose its fresh interest:

> When a democracy which is thirsting for freedom has evil cupbearers presiding over the feast, then, unless her rulers are very amenable and give a plentiful draft, she calls them to account and punishes them, and says that they are cursed oligarchs. And loyal citizens are insultingly termed by her, slaves who hug their chains; she would have subjects who are like rulers, and rulers who are like subjects: these are the men whom she praises and honours both in private and public.
>
> By degrees the anarchy finds a way into private houses, and ends by getting among the animals and

infecting them. Nor must I forget to tell of the liberty and equality of the two sexes in relation to each other. And I must add that no one who does not know would believe, how much greater is the liberty which the animals who are under the dominion of man have in a democracy than in any other State: for truly, the she-dogs, as the proverb says, are as good as their she-mistresses, and the horses and asses have a way of marching along with all the rights and dignities of freemen; and they will run at anybody who comes in their way if he does not leave the road clear for them; and all things are just ready to burst with liberty.

The ruin of oligarchy is the ruin of democracy; the same desire magnified and intensified by liberty overmasters democracy — the truth being that the excessive increase of anything often causes a reaction in the opposite direction; and this is the case not only in the seasons and in vegetable and animal life, but above all in forms of government. The excess of liberty, whether in States or individuals, seems only to pass into excess of slavery. And so tyranny naturally arises out of democracy, and the most aggravated form of tyranny and slavery out of the most extreme form of liberty.

Then come impeachments and judgments and trials of one another. The people have always some champion whom they set over them and nurse into greatness. This is he who begins to make a party against the rich. After a while he is driven out, but comes back, in spite of his enemies, a tyrant full grown. Then comes the famous request for a body-guard — "Let not the people's friend," as they say, "be lost to them." (Jowett, condensed.)

One escape from this fatal declension Plato saw, that, by the working of the inner law of self-restraint or by some divine interposition, the

people should, before it was too late, be turned to hearken to their natural leaders, and the State should thus develop from anarchy into a true aristocracy. The question, then or at any time, is not whether there shall be leaders but of what character these leaders shall be. There was the brawling tribe of demagogues and sycophants in the Athenian democracy, as there have been at other times of licencious upheaval. And the character of these men is always the same: they lead by flattery and by clamorous justification of the passing wave of desire. The aristocratic leaders whom Plato had in mind, and whom, for the confusion of posterity he called philosophers, were of the very opposite sort, being men who should guide by imposing their authority and experience on the impulsive emotions of the multitude. They should be politicians who might dare the displeasure of the people as Burke dared his constituents at Bristol: "The very attempt towards pleasing everybody discovers a temper always flashy, and often false and insincere.... I am to look, indeed, to your opinions; but to such opinions as you and I *must* have five years hence." They should be philosophers like John Stuart Mill who, facing the electors of Westminster and being asked whether he had ever said that English workingmen were "generally liars," replied simply, "I did." Such were to be the aristocrats of Plato's State, men of simple and

rational desires, lords of their own souls and so masters of others. Nor should they govern for their own smaller profit. For, as Socrates says, "it is not to the injury of the servant that we think he ought to be governed, but because it behooves each of us to be governed by the divine wisdom, having that power within us if possible, or, if that be impossible, then by an external authority, so that we may all, following the same guidance, be brought into likeness one to another and into good will."

There is something at once strange and familiar in this political discussion, now more than two thousand years old. To it Plato brought all his wisdom, sometimes not disdaining sophistry, trying to show by what kind of education and by what arts of persuasion and illusion a natural aristocracy could be imposed and maintained. It was pretty much the same problem that confronted Burke at the time of the French Revolution, inspiring his earlier writings on that event with incomparable eloquence, and stinging him in the end almost to a frenzy of despair. Burke did not come to the question with so clear an intuition as the Greek, and in some ways his *Reflections*, despite their modern dress, are more remote from us than is Plato's *Republic*, because he dealt less with the universal aspects of human nature. And in so far as his practical reason was coloured by the peculiar circumstances of his own

day, it has lost in direct application to the needs of another age. But he is not dead, despite my literary friend; wisdom is of longer life than the generations of mankind, and there is scarcely another book of modern times so full of political wisdom as Burke's *Reflections*.

And we must note, in the first place, that to Burke, as to Plato, it never occurred to think that society, even under the most lawless anarchy, could exist without leaders. "Power," he knew, "of some kind or other, will survive the shock in which manners and opinions perish." He knew too, and declared, that in the end he who made himself master of the army would overbear all other influences; but meanwhile he beheld the State of France under the sway of demagogues who were preparing the people for a carnival of blood and cruelty, and all his eloquence was exerted, and with extraordinary effect, to avert from his own country this plague of revolution. The *philosophes*, who had prepared the dogmas of popular flattery for the mouth of a Marat and a Robespierre, had intensified in him the natural British distrust of all application of abstract reasoning to government and the affairs of life; and he felt a profound aversion for those who would "lay down metaphysic propositions which infer universal consequences," and would then "limit logic by despotism." Being thus debarred from belief in a true philosophy by his experience

of the false, yet having himself a mind that grasped at general principles, he turned to "the happy effect of following nature, which is wisdom without reflection, and above it." In that "discipline of nature" he looked for the genuine guidance of society, and one of the memorable passages of his works is that in which he describes the character of those who, themselves under this control, should be for others "men of light and leading":

> A true natural aristocracy is not a separate interest in the State, or separable from it. It is an essential integrant part of any large body rightly constituted. It is formed out of a class of legitimate presumptions, which, taken as generalities, must be admitted for actual truths. To be bred in a place of estimation; to see nothing low and sordid from one's infancy; to be taught to respect one's self; to be habituated to the censorial inspection of the public eye; to look early to public opinion; to stand upon such elevated ground as to be enabled to take a large view of the widespread and infinitely diversified combinations of men and affairs in a large society; to have leisure to read, to reflect, to converse; to be enabled to draw the court and attention of the wise and learned wherever they are to be found; — to be habituated in armies to command and to obey; to be taught to despise danger in the pursuit of honor and duty; to be formed to the greatest degree of vigilance, foresight, and circumspection, in a state of things in which no fault is committed with impunity, and the slightest mistakes draw on the most ruinous consequences; — to be led to a guarded and regulated conduct, from a sense that you are considered as an instructor of your fellow-citizens

in their highest concerns, and that you act as a reconciler between God and man; — to be employed as an administrator of law and justice, and to be thereby amongst the first benefactors to mankind; — to be a professor of high science, or of liberal and ingenuous art; — to be amongst rich traders, who from their success are presumed to have sharp and vigorous understandings, and to possess the virtues of diligence, order, constancy, and regularity, and to have cultivated an habitual regard to commutative justice — these are the circumstances of men that form what I should call a *natural* aristocracy, without which there is no nation.

Not many, even among the wisest of our own generation, would fail to respond favourably to that glowing picture of nature's aristocrats, but when we come to the means by which Burke would ensure the existence and supremacy of such a class, it is different. Despite some tincture of the so-called "enlightenment," which few men of that age could entirely escape, Burke had a deep distrust of the restive, self-seeking nature of mankind, and as a restraint upon it he would magnify the passive as opposed to the active power of what is really the same human nature. This passive instinct he called "prejudice" — the unreasoning and unquestioning attachment to the family and "the little platoon we belong to in society," from which our affection, coincident always with a feeling of contented obligation, is gradually enlarged to take in the peculiar institutions of our country; "prejudice renders a

man's virtues his habits,. . . through just prejudice his duty becomes a part of his nature." Prejudice is thus the binding force which works from below upwards; the corresponding force which moves from above is "prescription" — the possession of rights and authority which have been confirmed by custom. In other words, Burke believed that the only practical way of ensuring a natural aristocracy was by the acceptance of a prescriptive oligarchy; in the long run and after account had been taken of all exceptions — and he was in no wise a blind worshipper of the Whig families which then governed England — he believed that the men of light and leading would already be found among, or by reason of their preëminence would be assumed into, the class of those whose views were broadened by the inherited possession of privilege and honours.

He so believed because it seemed to him that prejudice and prescription were in harmony with the methods of universal nature. Sudden change was abhorrent to him, and in every chapter of history he read that the only sound social development was that which corresponded to the slow and regular growth of a plant, deep-rooted in the soil and drawing its nourishment from ancient concealed sources. In such a plan prejudice was the ally of the powers of time, opposing to all visionary hopes a sense of duty to the solid existing reality and compelling upstart theory to prove it-

self by winning through long resistance. And with the force of time stood the kindred force of order and subordination personified in privilege. "A disposition to preserve, and an ability to improve, taken together," would be Burke's standard of a statesman; "everything else is vulgar in the conception, perilous in the execution." In passages of a singular elevation he combines the ideas of Hobbes on the social contract with those of Hooker on the sweep of divine universal law, harmonizing them with the newer conception of evolutionary growth. "Each contract of each particular State," he says, "is but a clause in the great primeval contract of eternal society, linking the lower with the higher natures, connecting the visible and invisible world, according to a fixed compact sanctioned by the inviolable oath which holds all physical and all moral natures, each in their appointed place." And thus, too, "our political system is placed in a just correspondence and symmetry with the order of the world, and with the mode of existence decreed to a permanent body composed of transitory parts; wherein, by the disposition of a stupendous wisdom, moulding together the great mysterious incorporation of the human race, the whole, at one time, is never old, or middle-aged, or young, but, in a condition of unchangeable constancy, moves on through the varied tenor of perpetual decay, fall,

renovation, and progression. Thus, by preserving the method of nature in the conduct of the State, in what we improve, we are never wholly new; in what we retain, we are never wholly obsolete."

If we look below these ideas of prejudice and privilege, time and subordination, for their one animating principle, we shall find it, I think, in the dominance of the faculty of the imagination. Nor did this imaginative substructure lying beneath all of Burke's writings and speeches, from the early essay on the *Sublime and Beautiful* to his latest outpourings on the French Revolution, escape the animadversion of his enemies. Tom Paine made good use of this trait in *The Rights of Man*, which he issued as an answer to the *Reflections*. "The age of chivalry is gone," Burke had exclaimed at the close of his famous tirade on the fall of Marie Antoinette. "Now all is changed. All the pleasing illusions, which made power gentle, and obedience liberal, which harmonized the different shades of life, and which, by a bland assimilation, incorporated into politics the sentiments which beautify and soften private society, are to be dissolved by this new conquering empire of light and reason. All the decent drapery of life is to be rudely torn off. All the superadded ideas, furnished from the wardrobe of a *moral imagination*. . . ." To this Paine retorted with terrible incision. Ridiculing the lamentation over

the French Queen as a mere sentimental rhapsody, he catches up Burke's very words with malign cunning: "Not one glance of compassion, not one commiserating reflection, that I can find throughout his book, has he bestowed on those who lingered out the most wretched of lives, a life without hope in the most miserable of prisons. It is painful to behold a man employing his talents to corrupt himself. Nature has been kinder to Mr. Burke than he has been to her. He is not affected by the reality of distress touching his heart, but by the showy resemblance of it striking his imagination. He pities the plumage, but forgets the dying bird."

Now there is an element of truth in Paine's charge, but there is distortion also. To say that Burke had no thought for the oppressed and the miserable is a wanton slander, disproved by abundant passages in the very *Reflections* and by his whole career. "If it should come to the last extremity," he had once avowed in Parliament, with no fear of contradiction, "and to a contest of blood, God forbid! God forbid! — my part is taken; I would take my fate with the poor, and low, and feeble." But it is the fact nevertheless, construe it how one will, that in the ordinary course of things Burke's ideas of government were moulded and his sentiment towards life was coloured by the vivid industry of his imagination, and that he thought the world at large controlled

by the same power. I doubt if analysis can reach a deeper distinction between the whole class of minds to which Burke belongs and that to which Paine belongs than is afforded by this difference in the range and texture of the imagination.

And in this Burke had with him the instinct of his people, while in a way transcending it; for a good deal of what we regard as the British character depends on just the excess of imagination over a rather dull sensibility and sluggish intelligence. This, if we look into it, is what Bagehot signalized as the saving dulness of England and what Walpole meant by attributing to "the good sense [note the contrast of *sense* and sensibility] of the English that they have not painted better." It was this same quality that inspired Burke's great comparison of the French excitability with the British stolidity: "Because half a dozen grasshoppers under a fern make the field ring with their importunate chink whilst thousands of great cattle, reposed beneath the shadow of the British oak, chew the cud and are silent, pray do not imagine that those who make the noise are the only inhabitants of the field." In its higher working, when sensibility and intelligence are also magnified, the imagination, no doubt, is the source of the loftier English poetry and eloquence, but in the lower range, which we are now considering, it is rather a slow, yet powerful and endearing, visualization of what is known and familiar;

it is the beginning of that prejudice for existing circumstances and actual relations which Burke exalted as the mother of content. And with content it produces a kind of egotistic satisfaction in the pomps and privileges which pass before the eye, giving to the humble a participation in things wherein they have no material share. In the baser nature this evokes a trait which we condemn as snobbishness; in the higher it results in a fine magnanimity: "He feels no ennobling principle in his own heart, who wishes to level all the artificial institutions which have been adopted for giving a body to opinion and permanence to fugitive esteem. It is a sour, malignant, envious disposition, without taste for the reality, or for any image or representation of virtue, that sees with joy the unmerited fall of what had long flourished in splendour and in honour." Thus, too, the imagination is an accomplice of time as well as of the law of subordination; indeed, its deepest and noblest function lies in its power of carrying what was once seen and known as a living portion and factor of the present, and there is no surer test of the quality of a man's mind than the degree in which he feels the long-remembered past as one of the vital and immediate laws of his being. So it is that the imagination is the chief creator and sustainer of the great memorial institutions of society, such as the Crown and the Church and the other pageantries of State, which

are the very embodiment of prescription, as it were the soul of tradition taking form and awful authority among the living. How deeply Burke felt this prescriptive right of the imagination no one need be told; nor is it necessary to quote the familiar passages in which he likens the British monarchy, with its bulwark of nobility, to "the proud keep of Windsor, rising in the majesty of proportion, and girt with the double belt of its kindred and coeval towers," or calls on the Church to "exalt her mitred front in courts and parliaments." There is the true Burke; he knew, as Paine knew, that the support of these institutions was in their symbolic sway over the imaginations of men, and that, with this defence undermined, they would crumble away beneath the aggressive passions of the present, or would remain as mere bloodless vanities. He thought that the real value of life was in its meaning to the imagination, and he was not ashamed to avow that the fall and tragedy of kings, because they bore in their person the destiny of ancient institutions, stirred him more profoundly than the sufferings of ordinary men.

It is perfectly easy for a keen and narrow intelligence to ridicule Burke's trust in the imagination, but as a matter of fact there is nothing more practical than a clear recognition of its vast domain in human affairs — it was Napoleon Bonaparte who said that "imagination rules the

world." Burke is not dead; his pages are an inexhaustible storehouse of inspiration and wisdom. But it is true nevertheless, that his ideas never quite freed themselves from their matrix, and that in his arguments the essential is involved in the contingent. Though he saw clearly enough the imperfections of the actual union of a prescriptive and a natural aristocracy, he was not able, with all his insight, to conceive the existence of the latter alone and by virtue of its own rights. He cried out that the age of chivalry was gone; he saw that the age of prescription, however it might be propped up for a time, was also doomed, not only in France but in his England as well, and with that away there was nothing for his imagination but an utter blank. As a consequence the problem of government for us to-day in its fundamental aspects is really closer to the exposition of the Greek philosopher two thousand years ago than to that of the modern English statesman. We have the naked question to answer: How shall a society, newly shaking itself free from a disguised plutocratic régime, be guided to suffer the persuasion of a natural aristocracy which has none of the insignia of an old prescription to impose its authority? Shall the true justice prevail, which by a right discrimination would confer power and influence in accordance with inner distinction; or shall that so-called justice prevail — for no man acknowledges open injustice —

which recommends itself as equality of opportunity, but in practice, by confusing the distinctions of age, sex, and character, comes at last to the brutal doctrine that might makes right, whether that might be the material strength of money or the jealous tyranny of numbers?

Leaders there will be, as there always have been. Leaders there are now, of each class, and we know their names. We still call the baser sort a demagogue, and his definition is still what it was among those who invented the term: "a flatterer of the people." Or, if that description seems too vague, you will recognize him as one who unites in himself enormous physical and mental activity, yet who employs these extraordinary talents in no serious way for the comfort and sustenance of the higher life of the imagination, but for running about restlessly and filling the public mind with stentorian alarms. He is one who proclaims ostentatiously that the first aim of government "must always be the possession by the average citizen of the right kind of character," and then, in his own person, gives an example of identifying character with passion by betraying a friend and malignantly misinterpreting his words, as soon as that friend may be decried for balking the popular will — and balking the path of the decrier's ambition. He is one who has been honoured as the leader of a great political party, and then, as soon as he is de-

throned from its leadership, denounces that same party as the tool of privilege and the source of corruption. He is one who, in proclaiming the principles of this new party, has constantly on his lips the magical word "justice," which he defines by the specious phrase "equality of opportunity," yet in the end identifies justice with the removal of all checks from government, to the end that the desire of the majority may be immediately carried out, whether right or wrong. For "it is impossible to invent constitutional devices which will prevent the popular will from being effective for wrong without also preventing it from being effective for right. The only safe course to follow in this great American democracy is to provide for making the popular judgment really effective."

To this end our exemplary demagogue would take away every obstacle between the opinion of the moment and the enactment of that opinion into law. Hence the initiative and referendum. Above the legislators is the Constitution, devised in order that legislation upon any particular question may be made to conform essentially with what has been laid down on deliberation as the wisest general course of government. It is a check upon hasty action, and implies a certain distrust of the popular judgment at any moment when passion or delusion may be at play. Therefore our demagogue will denounce reverence for

the Constitution as a fetich. Blithely ignoring the fact that Constitution-making and remaking is one of the pastimes of some States, and that even the Federal Constitution can be amended with none too great difficulty when the opinion of the people is really formed (as in the recent case of the election of senators), he will earnestly call upon the Constitutional Convention of Ohio "to provide in this Constitution means which will enable the people readily to amend it if at any point it works injustice"; and then, as if that provision were not sufficient to relax its mortmain, he will virtually abrogate its function of imposing any check whatsoever by adding "means which will permit the people themselves by popular vote, after due deliberation and discussion, but finally and without appeal, to settle what the proper construction of any constitutional point is"; and this construction is to be made, not legally, that is by an attempt to get at the actual meaning of the language used, but in accordance with the current notion of what is right.

But the full venom of his attack will be directed against the courts, because in them is impersonated the final sovereignty of unimpassioned judgment over the fluctuations of sentiment, and with it the last check upon the operations of the demagogue. The interpretation of the law in accordance with the conditions of life is to rest with the

people. If necessary they are to have the power of recalling the judge who is recalcitrant to their views, and at the least they are to have opportunity to reverse any decision of the courts which seems to them wrong. In this way he thinks to ensure "an independent judiciary"! To enforce the need of the recall, he accuses the courts of "refusing to permit the people of the States to exercise their right as a free people." Thereupon he cites what he calls a "typical" case in New York, in which the judges declared a workingmen's compensation act unconstitutional. "In other words, they insisted that the Constitution had *permanently* cursed our people with impotence to right wrong and had *perpetuated* a cruel iniquity." This tirade, followed by the most inflammatory appeals to the emotions, was uttered in 1912; at the very time when he was inveighing against the courts for perpetuating iniquity, the machinery was in train for amending the Constitution, and in less than two years that permanent curse was removed by the passage of a Constitutional law in full favor of the workingman. Such is the despotism of facts. And ever through these vituperative charges runs the high note of flattery: "If the American people are not fit for popular government, and if they should of right be the servants and not the masters of the men whom they themselves put in office."

The demagogue paints himself. In a word you

may know him by this single trait: he is one who, in the pursuit of the so-called rights of humanity, has a supreme contempt for those

> Unconcerning things, matters of fact;

one who, by means of an hypnotic loquaciousness, is constantly persuading the people that they have only to follow their first impulsive emotions to be right and safe, and that as a consequence every institution should be swept away which in their wiser, calmer moments they have created as a bulwark against their own more variable nature. To complete the picture we need to contrast with it Burke's portrait of the men of light and leading, with his sober statement of the law of liberty: "Men are qualified for civil liberty in exact proportion to their disposition to put moral chains upon their own appetites; in proportion as their love to justice is above their rapacity; in proportion as their soundness and sobriety of understanding is above their vanity and presumption; in proportion as they are more disposed to listen to the counsels of the wise and good, in preference to the flattery of knaves. Society cannot exist unless a controlling power upon will and appetite be placed somewhere, and the less of it there is within, the more there must be without. It is ordained in the eternal constitution of things, that men of intemperate minds cannot be free. Their passions forge their fet-

ters." Or we may go further back and look upon Plato's portrait of the guides who have earned the right to persuade others to temperance by the diligent exercise of that virtue in their own lives.

But the most notable example of demagoguery to-day is not a man, though he be clothed with thunder, but an institution. There are newspapers and magazines, reaching millions of readers, which have reduced the art to a perfect system. Their method is as simple as it is effective: always appeal to the emotion of the hour, and present it in terms which will justify its excess. Thus, in times when there is no wave of international envy disturbing the popular mind, our journal will print edifying editorials on brotherly love and laud the people as the great source of peace among nations. But let some racial dispute arise, as in the months preceding our Spanish war or the Italian raid on Africa, and this same journal will day after day use its editorial columns to inflame national hatred — and increase its circulation. On days when no sensational event has occurred, it will indulge in the prettiest sentimental sermons on the home and on family felicities. Nothing so moral; it will even plead in lacrimose type against the evil of allowing babies to lie in perambulators with their eyes exposed to the sun. But let the popular mind be excited by some crime of lust, and the same journal will forget the sweet obligations of home and wife,—

> That silly old morality,
> That, as these links were knit, our love should be —

and will deck out the loathsome debauchery of a murderer and his trull as the spiritual history of two young souls finding themselves in the pure air of passion; or some sordid liaison will be virtually lifted above marriage by the terms "affinity" or "heart-wife." And always, meanwhile, the people are to be soothed out of a sense of responsibility for errors and corruption by the skilfully maintained suggestion of a little group of men, entirely removed from the feelings and motives of ordinary humanity, sitting somewhere in secret conclave, plotting, plotting, to pervert the government. Our public crimes are never our own, but are the result of conspiracy.

These are the agencies that, in varying forms, have been at work in many ages. Only now we have formulated them into a noble maxim, which you will hear daily resounding in the pulpit and the press and in the street: "The cure of democracy is more democracy." It is a lie, and we know it is a lie. We know that this cry of the demagogue has invariably in the past led to anarchy and to despotism; and we know that to-day, were these forces unopposed, as happily they are not unopposed, the same result would occur —

> Our liberty reversed and charters gone,
> And we made servants to Opinion.

The remedy for the evils of licence is not in the elimination of popular restraint, but precisely in bringing the people to respect and follow their right leaders. The cure of democracy is not *more* democracy, but *better* democracy.

Nor is such a cure dependent on the appearance in a community of men capable of the light, for these the world always has, and these we too have in abundance; it depends rather on so relating these select natures to the community that they shall be also men of leading. The danger is, lest, in a State which bestows influence and honours on its demagogues, the citizens of more refined intelligence, those true philosophers who have discourse of reason, and have won the difficult citadel of their own souls, should withdraw from public affairs and retire into that citadel as it were into an ivory tower. The harm wrought by such a condition is twofold: it deprives the better minds of the larger sustenance of popular sympathy, producing among them a kind of intellectual *préciosité* and a languid interest in art as a refuge from life instead of an integral part of life; and, on the other hand, it tends to leave the mass of society a prey to the brutalized emotions of indiscriminate pleasure-seeking. In such a State distinction becomes the sorry badge of isolation. The need is to provide for a natural aristocracy.

Now it must be clearly understood that in advocating such a measure, at least under the

conditions that actually prevail to-day, there is involved no futile intention of abrogating democracy, in so far as democracy means government by and of the people. A natural aristocracy does not demand the restoration of inherited privilege or a relapse into the crude dominion of money; it is not synonymous with oligarchy or plutocracy. It calls rather for some machinery or some social consciousness which shall ensure both the selection from among the community at large of the "best" and the bestowal on them of "power"; it is the true consummation of democracy. And again, it must be said emphatically that it is not an academic question dealing with unreal distinctions. No one supposes that the "best" are a sharply defined class moving about among their fellows with a visible halo above them and a smile of beatific superiority on their faces. Society is not made of such classifications, and governments have always been of a more or less mixed character. A natural aristocracy signifies rather a tendency than a conclusion, and in such a sense it was taken, no doubt, by my sociological friend of radical ideas who pronounced it the great practical problem of the day.

The first requisite for solving this problem is that those who are designed by nature, so to speak, to form an aristocracy should come to an understanding of their own belief. There is a question to be faced boldly: What is the true aim

of society? Does justice consist primarily in levelling the distribution of powers and benefits, or in proportioning them to the scale of character and intelligence? Is the main purpose of the machinery of government to raise the material welfare of the masses, or to create advantages for the upward striving of the exceptional? Is the state of humanity to be estimated by numbers, or is it a true saying of the old stoic poet: *humanum paucis vivit genus?* Shall our interest in mankind begin at the bottom and progress upward, or begin at the top and progress downward? To those who feel that the time has come for a reversion from certain present tendencies, the answer to this question cannot be doubtful. Before anything else is done we must purge our minds of the current cant of humanitarianism. This does not mean that we are to deny the individual appeals of pity and introduce a wolfish egotism into human relations. On the contrary, it is just the preaching of false humanitarian doctrines that results practically in weakening the response to rightful obligations and, by "turning men's duties into doubts," throws the prizes of life to the hard grasping materialist and the coarse talker. In the end the happiness of the people also, in the wider sense, depends on the common recognition of the law of just subordination. But, whatever the ultimate effect of this sort may be, the need now is to counterbalance the excess of

emotional humanitarianism with an injection of the truth — even the contemptuous truth. Let us, in the name of a long-suffering God, put some bounds to the flood of talk about the wages of the bricklayer and the trainman, and talk a little more about the income of the artist and teacher and public censor who have taste and strength of character to remain in opposition to the tide. Let us have less cant about the great educative value of the theatre for the people and less humbug about the virtues of the nauseous problem play, and more consideration of what is clean and nourishing food for the larger minds. Let us forget for a while our absorbing desire to fit the schools to train boys for the shop and the counting-room, and concern ourselves more effectively with the dwindling of those disciplinary studies which lift men out of the crowd. Let us, in fine, not number ourselves among the traitors to their class who *invidiæ metu non audeant dicere.*

One hears a vast deal these days about class consciousness, and it is undoubtedly a potent social instrument. Why should there not be an outspoken class consciousness among those who are in the advance of civilization as well as among those who are in the rear? Such a compact of mutual sympathy and encouragement would draw the man of enlightenment out of his sterile seclusion and make him efficient; it would

strengthen the sense of obligation among those who hesitate to take sides, and would turn many despondent votaries of fatalism and many amateur dabblers in reform to a realization of the deeper needs of the day. Nor is this an appeal to idle sentiment. Much is said about the power of the masses and the irresistible spread of revolutionary ideas from the lower ranks upward. The facts of history point in quite the other direction. It was not the plebs who destroyed the Roman republic, but the corrupt factions of the Senate, and the treachery of such patricians as Catiline and Julius Cæsar. In like manner the French Revolution would never have had a beginning but for the teaching of the philosophers and the prevalence of equalitarian fallacies among the privileged classes themselves. The Vicomtesse de Noailles spoke from knowledge when she said: "La philosophie n'avait pas d'apôtres plus bienveillants que les grands seigneurs. L'horreur des abus, le mépris des distinctions héréditaires, tous ces sentiments dont les classes inférieures se sont emparées dans leur intérêt, ont dû leur premier éclat à l'enthousiasme des grands." And so to-day the real strength of socialistic doctrines is not in the discontent of the workingmen, but in the faint-hearted submission of those who by the natural division of society belong to the class that has everything to lose by revolution, and in the sentimental adherence of dilettante reform-

ers. The real danger is after all not so much from the self-exposed demagogues as from the ignorant tamperers with explosive material. It is not so much from the loathsome machinations of the yellow press, dangerous as they are, as from the journals that are supposed to stand for higher things, yet in their interest in some particular reform, support whole-heartedly candidates who flirt with schemes subversive of property and constitutional checks; in their zeal for the brotherhood of man, deal loosely with facts, and in their clamour for some specious extension of the franchise, neglect the finer claims of justice. These men and these journals, betrayers of the trust, are the real menace. Without their aid and abetment there may be rumblings of discontent, wholesome enough as warnings against a selfish stagnation, but there can be no concerted drive of society towards radical revolution. For radical forces are by their nature incapable of any persistent harmony of action, and have only the semblance of cohesion from a constraining fear or hatred. The dynamic source of revolution must be in the perversion of those at the top, and anarchy comes with their defalcation. Against such perils when they show themselves, the proper safeguard is the arousing of a counter class consciousness.

It is a sound theorem of President Lowell's that popular government "may be said to consist

of the control of political affairs by public opinion." Now there is to-day a vast organization for manipulating public opinion in favor of the workingman and for deluding it in the interest of those who grow fat by pandering in the name of emancipation to the baser emotions of mankind; but of organization among those who suffer from the vulgarizing trend of democracy there is little or none. As a consequence we see the conditions of life growing year by year harder for those whose labour is not concerned immediately with the direction of material forces or with the supply of sensational pleasure; they are ground, so to speak, between the upper and the nether millstone. Perhaps organization is not the word to describe accurately what is desired among those who are fast becoming the silent members of society, for it implies a sharper discrimination into grades of taste and character than exists in nature; but there is nothing chimerical in looking for a certain conscious solidarity at the core of the aristocratical class (using "aristocratical" always in the Platonic sense), with a looser cohesion at the edges. Let that class become frankly convinced that the true aim of a State is, as in the magnificent theory of Aristotle, to make possible the high friendship of those who have raised themselves to a vision of the supreme good, let them adopt means to confirm one another in that faith, and their influence will spread outward through

society and leaven the whole range of public opinion.

The instrument by which this control of public opinion is effected is primarily the imagination; and here we meet with a real difficulty. It was the advantage of such a union of aristocracy and inherited oligarchy as Burke advocated that it gave something visible and definite for the imagination to work upon, whereas the democratic aristocracy of character must always be comparatively vague. But we are not left wholly without the means of giving to the imagination a certain sureness of range while remaining within the forms of popular government. The opportunity is in the hands of our higher institutions of learning, and it is towards recalling these to their duty that the first efforts of reform should be directed. It is not my intention here to enter into the precise nature of this reform, for the subject is so large as to demand a separate essay. In brief the need is to restore to their predominance in the curriculum those studies that train the imagination, not, be it said, the imagination in its purely æsthetic function, though that aspect of it also has been sadly neglected, but the imagination in its power of grasping in a single firm vision, so to speak, the long course of human history and of distinguishing what is essential therein from what is ephemeral. The enormous preponderance of studies that deal with the immediate questions of

economics and government inevitably results in isolating the student from the great inheritance of the past; the frequent habit of dragging him through the slums of sociology, instead of making him at home in the society of the noble dead, debauches his mind with a flabby, or inflames it with a fanatic, humanitarianism. He comes out of college, if he has learnt anything, a *nouveau intellectuel*, bearing the same relation to the man of genuine education as the *nouveau riche* to the man of inherited manners; he is narrow and unbalanced, a prey to the prevailing passion of the hour, with no feeling for the majestic claims of that within us which is unchanged from the beginning. In place of this excessive contemporaneity we shall give a larger share of time and honour to the hoarded lessons of antiquity. There is truth in the Hobbian maxim that "imagination and memory are but one thing"; by their union in education alone shall a man acquire the uninvidious equivalent in character of those broadening influences which came to the oligarch through prescription — he is moulded indeed into the true aristocrat. And with the assertion of what may be called a spiritual prescription he will find among those over whom he is set as leader and guide a measure of respect which springs from something in the human breast more stable and honourable and more conformable to reason than the mere stolidity of unreflecting prejudice. For, when

everything is said, there could be no civilized society were it not that deep in our hearts, beneath all the turbulences of greed and vanity, abides the instinct of obedience to what is noble and of good repute. It awaits only the clear call from above.

ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP

ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP

ANY one who has traveled much about the country of recent years must have been impressed by the growing uneasiness of mind among thoughtful men.[1] Whether in the smoking-car, or the hotel corridor, or the college hall, everywhere, if you meet them off their guard and stripped of the optimism which we wear as a public convention, you will hear them saying in a kind of amazement, "What is to be the end of it all?" They are alarmed at the unsettlement of property and the difficulties that harass the man of moderate means in making provision for the future; they are uneasy over the breaking up of the old laws of decorum, if not of decency, and over the unrestrained pursuit of excitement at any cost; they feel vaguely that in the decay of religion the bases of society have been somehow weakened. Now, much of this sort of talk is as old as history, and has no special significance. We are prone to forget that civilization has always been a *tour de force*, so to speak, a little hard-won area of order and self-subordination amidst a vast wilderness of anarchy and barbarism that are continually threatening to overrun their bounds. But that is equally no reason for over-confidence. Civiliza-

[1] Written, all this, before the European war.

tion is like a ship traversing an untamed sea. It is a more complex machine in our day, with command of greater forces, and might seem correspondingly safer than in the era of sails. But fresh catastrophes have shown that the ancient perils of navigation still confront the largest vessel, when the crew loses its discipline or the officers neglect their duty; and the analogy is not without its warning.

Only a year after the sinking of the *Titanic* I was crossing the ocean, and it befell by chance that on the anniversary of that disaster we passed not very far from the spot where the proud ship lay buried beneath the waves. The evening was calm, and on the lee deck a dance had been hastily organized to take advantage of the benign weather. Almost alone I stood for hours at the railing on the windward side, looking out over the rippling water where the moon had laid upon it a broad street of gold. Nothing could have been more peaceful; it was as if Nature were smiling upon earth in sympathy with the strains of music and the sound of laughter that reached me at intervals from the revelling on the other deck. Yet I could not put out of my heart an apprehension of some luring treachery in this scene of beauty—and certainly the world can offer nothing more wonderfully beautiful than the moon shining from the far East over a smooth expanse of water. Was it not in such a calm as this that the unsus-

pecting vessel, with its gay freight of human lives, had shuddered, and gone down, forever? I seemed to behold a symbol; and there came into my mind the words we used to repeat at school, but are, I do not know just why, a little ashamed of to-day:

> Thou, too, sail on, O Ship of State!
> Sail on, O Union, strong and great!
> Humanity with all its fears,
> With all its hopes of future years,
> Is hanging breathless on thy fate! . . .

Something like this, perhaps, is the feeling of many men — men by no means given to morbid gusts of panic — amid a society that laughs over much in its amusement and exults in the very lust of change. Nor is their anxiety quite the same as that which has always disturbed the reflecting spectator. At other times the apprehension has been lest the combined forces of order might not be strong enough to withstand the ever-threatening inroads of those who envy barbarously and desire recklessly; whereas to-day the doubt is whether the natural champions of order themselves shall be found loyal to their trust, for they seem no longer to remember clearly the word of command that should unite them in leadership. Until they can rediscover some common ground of strength and purpose in the first principles of education and law and property and religion, we are in danger of falling a prey to the disorganizing and vulgarizing domination of ambitions which

should be the servants and not the masters of society.

Certainly, in the sphere of education there is a growing belief that some radical reform is needed; and this dissatisfaction is in itself wholesome. Boys come into college with no reading and with minds unused to the very practice of study; and they leave college, too often, in the same state of nature. There are even those, inside and outside of academic halls, who protest that our higher institutions of learning simply fail to educate at all. That is slander; but in sober earnest, you will find few experienced college professors, apart from those engaged in teaching purely utilitarian or practical subjects, who are not convinced that the general relaxation is greater now than it was twenty years ago. It is of considerable significance that the two student essays which took the prizes offered by the Harvard *Advocate* in 1913 were both on this theme. The first of them posed the question: "How can the leadership of the intellectual rather than the athletic student be fostered?" and was virtually a sermon on a text of President Lowell's: "No one in close touch with American education has failed to notice the lack among the mass of undergraduates of keen interest in their studies, and the small regard for scholarly attainment."

Now, the *Advocate* prizeman has his specific remedy, and President Lowell has his, and other

men propose other systems and restrictions; but the evil is too deep-seated to be reached by any superficial scheme of honours or to be charmed away by insinuating appeals. The other day Mr. William F. McCombs, chairman of the National Committee which engineered a college president into the White House, gave this advice to our academic youth: "The college man must forget — or never let it creep into his head — that he's a highbrow. If it does creep in, he's out of politics." To which one might reply in Mr. McCombs's own dialect, that unless a man can make himself a force in politics (or at least in the larger life of the State) precisely by virtue of being a "highbrow," he had better spend his four golden years otherwhere than in college. There it is: the destiny of education is intimately bound up with the question of social leadership, and unless the college, as it used to be in the days when the religious hierarchy it created was a real power, can be made once more a breeding place for a natural aristocracy, it will inevitably degenerate into a school for mechanical apprentices or into a pleasure resort for the *jeunesse dorée* (*sc.* the "gold coasters"). We must get back to a common understanding of the office of education in the construction of society and must discriminate among the subjects that may enter into the curriculum by their relative value towards this end.

A manifest condition is that education should

embrace the means of discipline, for without discipline the mind will remain inefficient just as surely as the muscles of the body, without exercise, will be left flaccid. That should seem to be a self-evident truth. Now it may be possible to derive a certain amount of discipline out of any study, but it is a fact, nevertheless, which cannot be gainsaid, that some studies lend themselves to this use more readily and effectively than others. You may, for instance, if by extraordinary luck you get the perfect teacher, make English literature disciplinary by the hard manipulation of ideas; but in practice it almost inevitably happens that a course in English literature either degenerates into the dull memorizing of dates and names or, rising into the O Altitudo, evaporates in romantic gush over beautiful passages. This does not mean, of course, that no benefit may be obtained from such a study, but it does preclude English literature generally from being made the backbone, so to speak, of a sound curriculum. The same may be said of French and German. The difficulties of these tongues in themselves and the effort required of us to enter into their spirit imply some degree of intellectual gymnastics, but scarcely enough for our purpose. Of the sciences it behooves one to speak circumspectly; undoubtedly mathematics and physics, at least, demand such close attention and such firm reasoning as to render them properly a part

of any disciplinary education. But there are good grounds for being sceptical of the effect of the non-mathematical sciences on the immature mind. Any one who has spent a considerable portion of his undergraduate time in a chemical laboratory, for example, as the present writer has done, and has the means of comparing the results of such elementary and pottering experimentation with the mental grip required in the humanistic courses, must feel that the real training obtained therein was almost negligible. If I may draw further from my own observation I must say frankly that, after dealing for a number of years with manuscripts prepared for publication by college professors of the various faculties, I have been forced to the conclusion that science, in itself, is likely to leave the mind in a state of relative imbecility. It is not that the writing of men who got their early drill too exclusively, or even predominantly, in the sciences lacks the graces of rhetoric — that would be comparatively a small matter— but such men in the majority of cases, even when treating subjects within their own field, show a singular inability to think clearly and consecutively, so soon as they are freed from the restraint of merely describing the process of an experiment. On the contrary, the manuscript of a classical scholar, despite the present dry-rot of philology, almost invariably gives signs of a habit of orderly and well-governed cerebration.

Here, whatever else may be lacking, is discipline. The sheer difficulty of Latin and Greek, the highly organized structure of these languages, the need of scrupulous search to find the nearest equivalents for words that differ widely in their scope of meaning from their derivatives in any modern vocabulary, the effort of lifting one's self out of the familiar rut of ideas into so foreign a world, all these things act as a tonic exercise to the brain. And it is a demonstrable fact that students of the classics do actually surpass their unclassical rivals in any field where a fair test can be made. At Princeton, for instance, Professor West has shown this superiority by tables of achievements and grades, which he has published in the *Educational Review* for March, 1913; and a number of letters from various parts of the country, printed in the *Nation*, tell the same story in striking fashion. Thus, a letter from Wesleyan (September 7, 1911) gives statistics to prove that the classical students in that university outstrip the others in obtaining all sorts of honours, commonly even honours in the sciences. Another letter (May 8, 1913) shows that in the first semester in English at the University of Nebraska the percentage of delinquents among those who entered with four years of Latin was below 7; among those who had three years of Latin and one or two of a modern language the percentage rose to 15; two years of Latin and two years of a modern language, 30

per cent; one year or less of Latin and from two to four years of a modern language, 35 per cent. And in the *Nation* of April 23, 1914, Professor Arthur Gordon Webster, the eminent physicist of Clark University, after speaking of the late B. O. Peirce's early drill and life-long interest in Greek and Latin, adds these significant words: "Many of us still believe that such a training makes the best possible foundation for a scientist." There is reason to think that this opinion is daily gaining ground among those who are zealous that the prestige of science should be maintained by men of the best calibre.

The disagreement in this matter would no doubt be less, were it not for an ambiguity in the meaning of the word "efficient" itself. There is a kind of efficiency in managing men, and there also is an intellectual efficiency, properly speaking, which is quite a different faculty. The former is more likely to be found in the successful engineer or business man than in the scholar of secluded habits, and because often such men of affairs received no discipline at college in the classics the argument runs that utilitarian studies are as disciplinary as the humanistic. But efficiency of this kind is not an academic product at all, and is commonly developed, and should be developed, in the school of the world. It comes from dealing with men in matters of large physical moment, and may exist with a mind utterly undisciplined

in the stricter sense of the word. We have had more than one illustrious example in recent years of men capable of dominating their fellows, let us say in financial transactions, who yet, in the grasp of first principles and in the analysis of consequences, have shown themselves to be as inefficient as children.

Probably, however, few men who have had experience in education will deny the value of discipline to the classics, even though they hold that other studies, less costly from the utilitarian point of view, are equally educative in this respect. But it is further of prime importance, even if such an equality, or approach to equality, were granted, that we should select one group of studies and unite in making it the core of the curriculum for the great mass of undergraduates. It is true in education as in other matters that strength comes from union and weakness from division, and if educated men are to work together for a common end they must have a common range of ideas, with a certain solidarity in their way of looking at things. As matters actually are, the educated man feels terribly his isolation under the scattering of intellectual pursuits, yet too often lacks the courage to deny the strange popular fallacy that there is virtue in sheer variety and that somehow well-being is to be struck out from the clashing of miscellaneous interests rather than from concentration. In one of his annual reports

some years ago President Eliot, of Harvard, observed from the figures of registration that the majority of students still at that time believed the best form of education for them was in the old humanistic courses, and *therefore*, he argued, the other courses should be fostered. There was never perhaps a more extraordinary syllogism since the *argal* of Shakespeare's grave-digger. I quote from memory, and may slightly misrepresent the actual statement of the influential "educationalist," but the spirit of his words, as indeed of his practice, is surely as I give it. And the working of this spirit is one of the main causes of the curious fact that scarcely any other class of men in social intercourse feel themselves, in their deeper concerns, more severed one from another than those very college professors who ought to be united in the battle for educational leadership. This estrangement is sometimes carried to an extreme almost ludicrous. I remember once in a small but advanced college the consternation that was awakened when an instructor in philosophy went to a colleague — both of them now associates in a large university — for information in a question of biology. "What business has he with such matters," said the irate biologist: "let him stick to his last, and teach philosophy — if he can!" That was a polite jest, you will say. Perhaps; but not entirely. Philosophy is indeed taught in one lecture hall, and biology in another,

but of conscious effort to make of education an harmonious driving force there is next to nothing. And as the teachers, so are the taught.

Such criticism does not imply that advanced work in any of the branches of human knowledge should be curtailed; but it does demand that, as a background to the professional pursuits, there should be a common intellectual training through which all students should pass, acquiring thus a single body of ideas and images in which they could always meet as brother initiates.

We shall, then, make a long step forward when we determine that in the college, as distinguished from the university, it is better to have the great mass of men, whatever may be the waste in a few unmalleable minds, go through the discipline of a single group of studies — with, of course, a considerable freedom of choice in the outlying field. And it will probably appear in experience that the only practicable group to select is the classics, with the accompaniment of philosophy and the mathematical sciences. Latin and Greek are, at least, as disciplinary as any other subjects; and if it can be further shown that they possess a specific power of correction for the more disintegrating tendencies of the age, it ought to be clear that their value as instruments of education outweighs the service of certain other studies which may seem to be more immediately serviceable.

For it will be pretty generally agreed that effi-

ciency of the individual scholar and unity of the scholarly class are, properly, only the means to obtain the real end of education, which is social efficiency. The only way, in fact, to make the discipline demanded by a severe curriculum and the sacrifice of particular tastes required for unity seem worth the cost, is to persuade men that the resulting form of education both meets a present and serious need of society and promises to serve those individuals who desire to obtain society's fairer honours. Mr. McCombs, speaking for the "practical" man, declares that there is no place in politics for the intellectual aristocrat. A good many of us believe that unless the very reverse of this is true, unless the educated man can somehow, by virtue of his education, make of himself a governor of the people in the larger sense, and even to some extent in the narrow political sense, unless the college can produce a hierarchy of character and intelligence which shall in due measure perform the office of the discredited oligarchy of birth, we had better make haste to divert our enormous collegiate endowments into more useful channels.

And here I am glad to find confirmation of my belief in the stalwart old *Boke Named the Governour*, published by Sir Thomas Elyot in 1531, the first treatise on education in the English tongue and still, after all these years, one of the wisest. It is no waste of time to take account

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of the theory held by the humanists when study at Oxford and Cambridge was shaping itself for its long service in giving to the oligarchic government of Great Britain whatever elements it possessed of true aristocracy. Elyot's book is equally a treatise on the education of a gentleman and on the ordinance of government, for, as he says elsewhere, he wrote "to instruct men in such virtues as shall be expedient for them which shall have authority in a weal public." I quote from various parts of his work with some abridgment, retaining the quaint spelling of the original, and I beg the reader not to skip, however long the citation may appear:

Beholde also the ordre that god hath put generally in al his creatures, begynning at the moste inferiour or base, and assendynge upwarde; so that in euery thyng is ordre, and without ordre may be nothing stable or permanent; and it may nat be called ordre, excepte it do contayne in it degrees, high and base, accordynge to the merite or estimation of the thyng that is ordred. And therfore hit appereth that god gyueth nat to euery man like gyftes of grace, or of nature, but to some more, some lesse, as it liketh his diuine maiestie. For as moche as understandying is the most excellent gyfte that man can receiue in his creation, it is therfore congruent, and accordynge that as one excelleth an other in that influence, as therby beinge next to the similitude of his maker, so shulde the astate of his persone be auanced in degree or place where understandynge may profite. Suche oughte to be set in a more highe place than the residue where they may se and also be sene; that by the

beames of theyr excellent witte, shewed throughe the glasse of auctorite, other of inferiour understandynge may be directed to the way of vertue and commodious liuynge....

Thus I conclude that nobilitie is nat after the vulgare opinion of men, but is only the prayse and surname of vertue; whiche the lenger it continueth in a name or lignage, the more is nobilitie extolled and meruailed at....

If thou be a gouernour, or haste ouer other soueraygntie, knowe thy selfe. Knowe that the name of a soueraigne or ruler without actuall gouernaunce is but a shadowe, that gouernaunce standeth nat by wordes onely, but principally by acte and example; that by example of gouernours men do rise or falle in vertue or vice. Ye shall knowe all way your selfe, if for affection or motion ye do speke or do nothing unworthy the immortalitie and moste precious nature of your soule....

In semblable maner the inferior persone or subiecte aught to consider, that all be it he in the substaunce of soule and body be equall with his superior, yet for als moche as the powars and qualities of the soule and body, with the disposition of reason, be nat in euery man equall, therfore god ordayned a diuersitie or preeminence in degrees to be amonge men for the necessary derection and preseruation of them in conformitie of lyuinge....

Where all thynge is commune, there lacketh ordre; and where ordre lacketh, there all thynge is odiouse and uncomly.

Such is the goal which the grave Sir Thomas pointed out to the noble youth of his land at the beginning of England's greatness, and such, within the bounds of human frailty, has been the

ideal even until now which the two universities have held before them. Naturally the method of training prescribed in the sixteenth century for the attainment of this goal is antiquated in some of its details, but it is no exaggeration, nevertheless, to speak of the *Boke Named the Governour* as the very Magna Charta of our education. The scheme of the humanist might be described in a word as a disciplining of the higher faculty of the imagination to the end that the student may behold, as it were in one sublime vision, the whole scale of being in its range from the lowest to the highest under the divine decree of order and subordination, without losing sight of the immutable veracity at the heart of all development, which "is only the praise and surname of virtue." This was no new vision, nor has it ever been quite forgotten. It was the whole meaning of religion to Hooker, from whom it passed into all that is best and least ephemeral in the Anglican Church. It was the basis, more modestly expressed, of Blackstone's conception of the British Constitution and of liberty under law. It was the kernel of Burke's theory of statecraft. It is the inspiration of the sublimer science, which accepts the hypothesis of evolution as taught by Darwin and Spencer, yet bows in reverence before the unnamed and incommensurable force lodged as a mystical purpose within the unfolding universe. It was the wisdom of that child of Stratford who,

building better than he knew, gave to our literature its deepest and most persistent note. If anywhere Shakespeare seems to speak from his heart and to utter his own philosophy, it is in the person of Ulysses in that strange satire of life as "still wars and lechery" which forms the theme of *Troilus and Cressida*. Twice in the course of the play Ulysses moralizes on the causes of human evil. Once it is in an outburst against the devastations of disorder:

> Take but degree away, untune that string,
> And, hark, what discord follows! each thing meets
> In mere oppugnancy: the bounded waters
> Should lift their bosoms higher than the shores,
> And make a sop of all this solid globe:
> Strength should be lord of imbecility,
> And the rude son should strike his father dead:
> Force should be right; or rather, right and wrong,
> Between whose endless jar justice resides,
> Should lose their names, and so should justice too.
> Then every thing includes itself in power,
> Power into will, will into appetite.

And, in the same spirit, the second tirade of Ulysses is charged with mockery at the vanity of the present and at man's usurpation of time as the destroyer instead of the preserver of continuity:

> For time is like a fashionable host
> That slightly shakes his parting guest by the hand,
> And with his arms outstretch'd, as he would fly,
> Grasps in the comer: welcome ever smiles,
> And farewell goes out sighing. O, let not virtue seek

> Remuneration for the thing it was;
> For beauty, wit,
> High birth, vigour of bone, desert in service,
> Love, friendship, charity, are subjects all
> To envious and calumniating time.

To have made this vision of the higher imagination a true part of our self-knowledge, in such fashion that the soul is purged of envy for what is distinguished and we feel ourselves fellows with the preserving, rather than the destroying, forces of time, is to be raised into the nobility of the intellect. To hold this knowledge in a mind trained to fine efficiency and confirmed by faithful comradeship is to take one's place with the rightful governors of the people. Nor is there any narrow or invidious exclusiveness in such an aristocracy, which differs in this free hospitality from an oligarchy of artificial prescription. The more its membership is enlarged, the greater is its power and the more secure are the privileges of each individual. Yet, if not exclusive, an academic aristocracy must by its very nature be exceedingly jealous of any levelling process which would shape education to the needs of the intellectual proletariat and so diminish its own ranks. It cannot admit that, if education is once levelled downwards, the whole body of men will of themselves gradually raise the level to the higher range; for its creed declares that elevation must come from leadership rather than from self-motion of the

mass. It will therefore be opposed to any scheme of studies which relaxes discipline or destroys intellectual solidarity. It will look with suspicion on any system which turns out half-educated men with the same diplomas as the fully educated, thinking that such methods of slurring differences are likely to do more harm by discouraging the ambition to attain what is distinguished than good by spreading wide a thin veneer of culture. In particular it will distrust the present huge overgrowth of courses in government and sociology, which send men into the world skilled in the machinery of statecraft and with minds sharpened to the immediate demands of special groups, but with no genuine training of the imagination and no understanding of the longer problems of humanity. It will think that the dominance of such studies is one of the causes that men leave our colleges with no hold on the past, with nothing, as Burke said, "amidst so vast a fluctuation of passions and opinions, to concentrate their thoughts, to ballast their conduct, to preserve them from being blown about by every wind of fashionable doctrine." It will set itself against any regular subjection of the "fierce spirit of liberty," which is the breath of distinction and the very charter of aristocracy, to the sullen spirit of equality, which proceeds from envy in the baser sort of democracy. It will regard the character of education and the disposi-

tion of the curriculum as a question of supreme importance; for its motto is always, *abeunt studia in mores*.

Now this aristocratic principle has, so to speak, its everlasting embodiment in Greek literature, from whence it was taken over into Latin and transmitted, with much mingling of foreign and even contradictory ideas, to the modern world. From Homer to the last runnings of the Hellenic spirit you will find it taught by every kind of precept and enforced by every kind of example; nor was Shakespeare writing at hazard, but under the instinctive guidance of genius, when he put his aristocratic creed into the mouth of the hero who to the end remained for the Greeks the personification of their peculiar wisdom. In no other poetry of the world is the law of distinction, as springing from a man's perception of his place in the great hierarchy of privilege and obligation from the lowest human being up to the Olympian gods, so copiously and magnificently set forth as in Pindar's Odes of Victory. And Æschylus was the first dramatist to see with clear vision the primacy of the intellect in the law of orderly development, seemingly at variance with the divine immutable will of Fate, yet finally in mysterious accord with it. When the philosophers of the later period came to the creation of systematic ethics they had only the task of formulating what was already latent in the poets and historians of

their land; and it was the recollection of the fulness of such instruction in the *Nicomachean Ethics* and the Platonic Dialogues, with their echo in the *Officia* of Cicero, as if in them were stored up all the treasures of antiquity, that raised our Sir Thomas into wondering admiration:

> Lorde god, what incomparable swetnesse of wordes and mater shall he finde in the saide warkes of Plato and Cicero; wherin is ioyned grauitie with dilectation, excellent wysedome with diuine eloquence, absolute vertue with pleasure incredible, and euery place is so farced [crowded] with profitable counsaile, ioyned with honestie, that those thre bokes be almoste sufficient to make a perfecte and excellent gouernour.

There is no need to dwell on this aspect of the classics. He who cares to follow their full working in this direction, as did our English humanist, may find it exhibited in Plato's political and ethical scheme of self-development, or in Aristotle's ideal of the Golden Mean which combines magnanimity with moderation, and elevation with self-knowledge. If a single word were used to describe the character and state of life upheld by Plato and Aristotle, as spokesmen of their people, it would be *eleutheria*, liberty: the freedom to cultivate the higher part of a man's nature — his intellectual prerogative, his desire of truth, his refinements of taste — and to hold the baser part of himself in subjection; the freedom also, for its own perfection, and indeed for its very existence,

to impose an outer conformity to, or at least respect for, the laws of this inner government on others who are of themselves ungoverned. Such liberty is the ground of true distinction; it implies the opposite of an equalitarianism which reserves its honours and rewards for those who attain a bastard kind of distinction by the cunning of leadership without departing from common standards, for the demagogues, that is, who rise by flattery. But this liberty is by no means dependent on the artificial distinctions of privilege; on the contrary, it is peculiarly adapted to an age whose appointed task must be to create a natural aristocracy as a *via media* between an equalitarian democracy and a prescriptive oligarchy or a plutocracy. The fact is notable that, as the real hostility to the classics in the present day arises from an instinctive suspicion of them as standing in the way of a downward-levelling mediocrity, so, at other times, they have fallen under displeasure for their veto on a contrary excess. Thus, in his savage attack on the Commonwealth, to which he gave the significant title *Behemoth*, Hobbes lists the reading of classical history among the chief causes of the rebellion. "There were," he says, "an exceeding great number of men of the better sort, that had been so educated as that in their youth, having read the books written by famous men of the ancient Grecian and Roman commonwealths concerning their polity and great actions, in

which books the popular government was extolled by that glorious name of liberty, and monarchy disgraced by the name of tyranny, they became thereby in love with their forms of government; and out of these men were chosen the greatest part of the House of Commons; or if they were not the greatest part, yet by advantage of their eloquence were always able to sway the rest." To this charge Hobbes returns again and again, even declaring that "the universities have been to this nation as the Wooden Horse was to the Trojans." And the uncompromising monarchist of the *Leviathan*, himself a classicist of no mean attainments, as may be known by his translation of Thucydides, was not deceived in his accusation. The tyrannicides of Athens and Rome, the Aristogeitons and Brutuses and others, were the heroes by whose example the leaders of the French Revolution were continually justifying their acts.

> There Brutus starts and stares by midnight taper.
> Who all the day enacts — a woollen-draper.

And again, in the years of the Risorgimento, more than one of the champions of Italian liberty went to death with those great names on their lips.

So runs the law of order and right subordination. But if the classics offer the best service to education by inculcating an aristocracy of intel-

lectual distinction, they are equally effective in enforcing the similar lesson of time. It is a true saying of our ancient humanist that "the longer it continueth in a name or lineage, the more is nobility extolled and marvelled at." It is true because in this way our imagination is working with the great conservative law of growth. Whatever may be in theory our democratic distaste for the insignia of birth, we cannot get away from the fact that there is a certain honour of inheritance and that we instinctively pay homage to one who represents a noble name. There is nothing really illogical in this, for, as an English statesman has put it, "the past is one of the elements of our power." He is the wise democrat who, with no opposition to such a decree of Nature, endeavours to control its operation by expecting noble service where the memory of nobility abides. When, recently, Oxford bestowed its highest honour on an American, distinguished not only for his own public acts but for the great tradition embodied in his name, the Orator of the University did not omit this legitimate appeal to the imagination, singularly appropriate in its academic Latin:

> . . . Statim succurrit animo antiqua illa Romae condicio, cum non tam propter singulos cives quam propter singulas gentes nomen Romanum floreret. Cum enim civis alicujus et avum et proavum principes civitatis esse creatos, cum patrem legationis munus apud aulam Britannicam summa cum laude esse exsecutum cognovi-

mus; cum denique ipsum per totum bellum stipendia equo meritum, summa pericula "Pulcra pro Libertate" ausum,... Romanae alicujus gentis — Brutorum vel Deciorum — annales evolvere videmur, qui testimonium adhibent "fortes creari fortibus," et majorum exemplis et imaginibus nepotes ad virtutem accendi.[1]

Is there any man so dull of soul as not to be stirred by that enumeration of civic services zealously inherited; or is there any one so envious of the past as not to believe that such memories should be honoured in the present as an incentive to noble emulation?

Well, we cannot all of us count Presidents and Ambassadors among our ancestors, but we can, if we will, in the genealogy of the inner life enroll ourselves among the adopted sons of a family in comparison with which the Bruti and Decii of old and the Adamses of to-day are veritable *new men*. We can see what defence against the meaner depredations of the world may be drawn from the pride of birth, when, as it sometimes happens, the

[1] "One's mind reverts inevitably to that ancient state of affairs in Rome, when the Roman name was illustrious not only through individual citizens, but also through particular families. For when we consider that a man's grandfather and great-grandfather held the highest office in a State, and that his father represented his country with the highest distinction at the court of Great Britain, and when we remember, finally, that the man himself gave all his strength to military service throughout a war, incurring extreme perils 'For the sake of Sweet Liberty' . . . . in these recollections we seem to be unrolling the annals of some Roman family, — of the Bruti or the Decii, — annals bearing witness to the fact that 'the strong are born to the strong,' and that by the examples and traditions of their ancestors the descendants are incited to distinguished achievement." — The honour was bestowed on the late Charles Francis Adams.

obligation of a great past is kept as a contract with the present; shall we forget to measure the enlargement and elevation of mind which ought to come to a man who has made himself the heir of the ancient Lords of Wisdom? "To one small people," as Sir Henry Maine has said, in words often quoted, "it was given to create the principle of Progress. That people was the Greek. Except the blind forces of Nature, nothing moves in this world which is not Greek in its origin." That is a hard saying, but scarcely exaggerated. Examine the records of our art and our science, our philosophy and the enduring element of our faith, our statecraft and our notion of liberty, and you will find that they all go back for their inspiration to that one small people, and strike their roots into the soil of Greece. What we have added, it is well to know; but he is the aristocrat of the mind who can display a diploma from the schools of the Academy and Lyceum and from the Theatre of Dionysus. What tradition of ancestral achievement in the Senate or on the field of battle shall broaden a man's outlook and elevate his will equally with the consciousness that his way of thinking and feeling has come down to him by so long and honourable a descent, or shall so confirm him in his better judgment against the ephemeral and vulgarizing solicitations of the hour? Other men are creatures of the visible moment; he is a citizen of the past and of the future. And such a

charter of citizenship it is the first duty of the college to provide.

I have limited myself in these pages to a discussion of what may be called the public side of education, considering the classics in their power to mould character and to foster sound leadership in a society much given to drifting. Of the inexhaustible joy and consolation they afford to the individual, only he can have full knowledge who has made the writers of Greece and Rome his friends and counsellors through many vicissitudes of life. It is related of Sainte-Beuve, who, according to Renan, read everything and remembered everything, that one could observe a peculiar serenity on his face whenever he came down from his study after reading a book of Homer. The cost of learning the language of Homer is not small; but so are all fair things difficult, as the Greek proverb runs, and the reward in this case is precious beyond estimation.

THE PARADOX OF OXFORD

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It is commonly agreed that no other city in Great Britain lays so potent a spell on the visitor as Oxford. The gardens of the sister university along the Cam may catch the charm of an English summer more entrancingly; Edinburgh, with her crown of hills, and her cavernous wynds, may be more picturesque; London, with her pride of empire, her spoils of art, her web of human triumphs and despair, may be more appalling to the imagination; but there is something in the aspect of the crowded, cloistered colleges of Oxford that penetrates to the most intimate recesses of the observer's mind and leaves him not quite the same man as before. "There is an air about it resonant of joy and hope: it speaks with a thousand tongues to the heart; it waves its mighty shadow over the imagination: . . . its streets are paved with the names of learning that can never wear out: its green quadrangles breathe the silence of thought, conscious of the weight of yearnings innumerable after the past, of loftiest aspirations for the future."

It was this feeling of the intellectual hopes and moral ideas of many generations of men made visible in stone, rather than what has been called

the "almost despairing sense of loveliness," that stirred me profoundly on my first visit to Oxford, as I walked from court to court in the expressive silence of the long vacation. It was a feeling good and salutary for the heart. Yet in the end the impression left upon me was curiously mixed. I was elated and teased at the same time; my spirits were, so to speak, both enlarged and contracted. In part this was due, no doubt, to the manifest incongruities of the town itself as it has developed in these latter years. From the medieval seclusion of a quadrangle one steps into a street now bustling with modern shops and a very unmedieval throng of shoppers. Only a little while ago, in Matthew Arnold's day, "the pleasant country still ran up to the walls and gates of the colleges; no fringe of mean or commonplace suburbs interposed between the coronal of spires and towers and its green setting." But now, if the visitor, with his mind filled with the lonely religious wrestlings of Newman, would walk out to Iffley and Littlemore, he must pass through long rows of dull and vulgar villas. There is something disconcerting in these inharmonious contrasts. And, guided perhaps by this discord of the past and the present, one begins to be aware of something paradoxical in the beauty and significance of the university itself. The very architecture of the place, with all its charm, is a kind of anomaly. "True to her character of the

home of lost causes and impossible loyalties, Oxford clung with a tragic desperation to her ancient garments of Gothic pattern, hugging them about her until, worn to rags and tatters, they dropped off, and she was constrained to clothe her nakedness with the sole contemporary dress available in the eighteenth century, to wit, that sheer Palladianism into which the illusory 'New Birth' movement itself had by that time degenerated. Thus it befell that Oxford architecture never passed through the normal gamut of successive phases of declension from the sixteenth century onward, but that between the perfection of English medieval masoncraft . . . and the corrupt fashion of Trinity, Queen's, and Worcester Colleges, . . . there was no intermediate stage but that of the so-called 'Oxford Gothic.'"[1]

And this "picturesque hybrid" in building, which is neither Renaissance nor medieval, neither quite Greek nor quite Christian, is symbolical of what Oxford has stood for intellectually and morally. With good right one of her own living poets has described her as

> . . .the mother of celestial moods,
> Who o'er the saints' inviolate array
> Hath starred her robe of fair beatitudes
> With jewels worn by Hellas.

There is, if you stop to think about it, this huge inconsistency underlying the institution of Ox-

[1] Aymer Vallance, *The Old Colleges of Oxford.*

ford. It was founded as a monastic school to train boys for the priesthood, and its colleges still bear something of the outward appearance of cloistered retreats. Until well into the last century every matriculant was obliged to subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles, and even to-day the policy of the university is largely controlled by a Convocation of black-robed priests who come up from their country parishes with the zeal of the Church burning in their breasts. Yet education at Oxford, though it was at the first directed to monkish ends and though until very recently it retained a good deal of that scholastic colouring, was from an early date, if not from the beginning, crossed with Pagan ideals. Aristotle was held to be an authority in morals by the side of St. Augustine, prayers were offered to Jehovah when Olympian Zeus was in the heart of the worshipper, and boys were taught, are still taught, to mould their emotions at once to the modes of the Psalms and of Horace.

This is what I have meant by the classical paradox of Oxford, giving it that name not because this inconsistency is peculiar to the university, but because there more than anywhere else it is driven into the imagination by the teasing charm of a petrified and glorified tradition. It is indeed, if we look below the surface of things, deeply imbedded in the foundations of our whole modern life, and points far back to that Hellenistic civilization in which the ideals of Greece and the Orient

were mingled to produce the new world. To understand the character of this union one need only read a few pages of such a treatise as Lucian's *The Wisdom of Nigrinus*. We have in this dialogue the story of a visit to a philosopher of the second century of our era who styled himself a Platonist, a denizen of Rome but probably enough, like the writer Lucian, a child of Asia. After relating the philosopher's own account of his mode of life, with its ascetic disdain and childish vanities, the visitor tells the strange effect of the story upon himself:

> In a great fit of confusion and giddiness, I dripped with sweat, I stumbled and stuck in the endeavour to speak, my voice failed, my tongue faltered, and finally I began to cry in embarrassment. . . . My wound was deep and vital, and his words, shot with great accuracy, clove, if I may say so, my very soul in twain. [Translated by A. M. Harmon.]

This, it is almost necessary to observe, is not a scene of conversion from Wesley's *Diary*, but is a page from the book of one who, more perhaps than any other writer of his age, was steeped in the traditional learning of antiquity. These men were the inheritors of the poetry and philosophy of Greece; yet how the meaning of things is changed! How far we have got from Pindar's song of "wisdom blooming in the soul," from his praise of the man who, because death awaits at the end, will not "sit vainly in the dark through

a dull and nameless age, and without lot in noble deeds," and from his glorification of those upon whom, for their reverence of things divine in the hour of splendid triumph, "the pleasant lyre and the sweet pipe shed their grace"! We have gone a great way from Aristotle's notion of the "magnanimous" man, who in winning the honours of the world has won also his own soul. And even if, formally, the ideal of Nigrinus can be connected with Plato's contrast of the visible and invisible worlds, yet the animus, so to speak, of the new wisdom is something very different from that which heartened men in the garden of the Athenian Academy. In place of the philosopher who, seeking the vision of the gods, still kept in his heart the fair and happy things of Hellas, and who, knowing the emptiness of life's rewards, was nevertheless ready to serve and govern the State, we now have one who regards it as the highest goal of life to sit in a kind of idle abstraction from the world and hypnotize himself into empty dreams of his own wisdom. This new race of philosophers indeed, whom Lucian eulogizes on one page and ridicules on another, are often hard to distinguish from bearded monks. They speak the words of Athens, but with barbarous images in their souls; they mumble the sentences of the Academy, but their denial of practical life will be known all through the Middle Ages as the *contemptus mundi*, and already one

sees how their asceticism and their praise of poverty divide them harshly into saints and hypocrites not entirely unlike those of the cloister.

And the paradox has its obverse side. No doubt there is a real emotional difference between the philosophers of the Hellenistic world and the confessors of the Christian world, due to the fact that the former still confessed the Socratic doctrine, however they may have distorted it, whereas the latter honestly subjected it to what they regarded as a higher revelation. Yet the creators of the new religion could not escape the power of the old tradition. The basis of their education, in language entirely and to no small extent in ideas, remains Greek and Latin, however the superstructure may be Christian and Oriental. Heretics, like the Carpocratians, were content to set up an image of Aristotle by the side of that of Jesus, and to pay equal adoration to both. Nor were the Fathers and rulers of the Church unaware of their debt; their trick of decrying Pagan literature is due in no small part to a feeling of uneasy dependence on it for their knowledge and philosophy. They would use it and at the same time spurn it under their feet as they reached up to the celestial wisdom. So in a comment on a verse in Kings: "But all the Israelites went down to the Philistines, to sharpen every man his share, his coulter, and his axe," Gregory the Great, or some other, applies the

words to the contrast between the classical tradition and the new faith.

> We go down to the Philistines [he says] when we incline the mind to secular studies; Christian simplicity is upon a height. Secular books are said to be in the plain since they have no celestial truths. God put secular knowledge in a plain before us that we should use it as a step to ascend to the heights of Scripture. So Moses first learned the wisdom of the Egyptians that he might be able to understand and expound the divine precepts; Isaiah, most eloquent of the prophets, was *nobiliter instructus et urbanus;* and Paul had sat at Gamaliel's feet before he was lifted to the height of the third heaven. One goes to the Philistines to sharpen one's plow, because secular learning is needed as a training for Christian preaching.[1]

But if medieval man, in general, was ready to accept the Pagan tradition as a mere treasure of the Philistines to be plundered for the benefit of the chosen people, there were those also who could not fail to observe that the wisdom of the slave often contradicted the faith of the master in the most disconcerting manner. Being honest with themselves, such men made a brave attempt to effect a reconciliation — always, of course, *ad majorem Dei gloriam.* The most notable of these efforts is the stupendous *Summa* of St. Thomas Aquinas, in which the newly recovered philosophy of Aristotle is united with Christian doctrine so as to make a vast body

[1] From H. O. Taylor, *The Medieval Mind.*

of theology. The words of the Philosopher (no other name is needed to designate Aristotle) and sentences of the Fathers are quoted together without distinction as if they were of one and the same authority. But, despite the admirable patience and inexhaustible cunning of the Angelic Doctor, an instructed reader can go through his work and distinguish the two elements of which his system is composed, as we can separate the two metals of an alloy; there is no chemical compound here, but a mechanical mixture. The distinction can be made visible to the eyes by turning to Dante, whose allegory of the future is based frankly on the *Summa* of St. Thomas. In the purgation of sinners on the Mount, some of the penalties are based on the Aristotelian ethic of the mean and take the form of suffering an extreme of the evil excess, while others, springing from the Christian notion of virtue as itself an extreme, take the form of suffering an extreme deficiency of the good unattained. There is even more significance in the guides who carry the pilgrim through hell and purgatory up to the celestial sphere. In the first two realms, Virgil, the bearer of the classical tradition, is sufficient, but when the poet from the earthly Paradise is about to mount to the heavenly Paradise and the vision of God, he needs the help of Beatrice, who is the symbol and voice of theology.

When we pass from the Middle Ages to the mod-

ern world we find two notable movements aiming at an elimination of this ethical inconsistency. One of these may be called the Pagan revival of the Renaissance. It was nothing less than an effort to surmount the difficulty by throwing away the moral ideals of both Christianity and classicism and clinging to the purely natural and imaginative aspects of the ancient world in what came to be regarded as Paganism. Not a little of the art and literature of Italy is of that utterly non-moral sort. The other movement undertook to reconcile Greek philosophy and Christianity in a synthesis which should embrace the higher and, in this differing from the work of St. Thomas, the less dogmatic elements of each. This was the half-avowed purpose of the Cambridge Platonists, a noble ambition which somehow, owing perhaps to the absence of any great genius among them, they just failed to achieve. Their failure left the task still to be accomplished, if, indeed, it can in any way be accomplished.

It may seem that I am dwelling over much on a commonplace; yet I doubt if we often realize how deeply this discrepancy lies imbedded in our modern civilization. Certainly the knowledge of it came to me in Oxford with the force almost of discovery. And I remember the hour and the place. It was one grey day in the quadrangle of Oriel College, as I stood by the entrance to the Common Room looking up at the windows of

what had been the rooms of John Henry Newman. In that college the Oxford Movement had its inception and passed away. The little group of scholars who in the Common Room met together and discussed the meaning of religion and the office of the church were men trained and steeped in Aristotle and the other classics; they never lost that discipline, yet their whole endeavour was to bring back the medieval interpretation of life. An amusing incident of this tendency is connected with Dr. Hampden's Bampton Lectures on scholastic philosophy, delivered in 1832, and afterward published. No one in Oxford read the book, not even Newman who wrote against it, and no one there had read any scholastic philosophy, says Mr. Mozley, who ought to know; he even declares that the book is unreadable, and I, for one, have taken his word for it. Yet the rumour got about that Dr. Hampden was trying to undermine the authority of medieval tradition, and the horror and hubbub were enormous. The situation became at least anomalous when Hampden, though Regius Professor of Divinity, was deprived of his place on the board that chose the Select Preachers for the University.

These things came to my mind as I stood in the quiet quadrangle of Oriel, and then I remembered the life of the man who must so often in moments of perplexity have looked out of the windows over my head, gathering from this very scene

comfort and strength for his battle with the world. Newman, if anyone, was the very embodiment of the Oxford spirit, and if we think of his great struggle as a hesitation between the Anglican and Roman Churches, it was, in a deeper sense, the agony of an intuitive soul caught in the dilemma of the two traditions of which the very stones of his college with their hybrid architecture, neither Renaissance nor Gothic, are a symbol. How thoroughly his mind was endued with the humanistic spirit, how much the great poets of antiquity meant to him, may be known from one of his famous paragraphs, one of the supreme things of our speech:

> Let us consider, too, how differently young and old are affected by the words of some classic author, such as Homer or Horace. Passages, which to a boy are but rhetorical commonplaces, neither better nor worse than a hundred others, which any clever writer might supply, which he gets by heart and thinks very fine, and imitates, as he thinks, successfully, in his own flowing versification, at length come home to him, when long years have passed, and he has had experience of life, and pierce him, as if he had never before known them, with their sad earnestness and vivid exactness. Then he comes to understand how it is that lines, the birth of some chance morning or evening at an Ionian festival, or among the Sabine hills, have lasted generation after generation, for thousands of years, with a power over the mind, and a charm which the current literature of his own day, with all its obvious advantages, is utterly unable to rival. Perhaps this is the reason of the medieval opinion about

Virgil, as of a prophet or a magician; his single words and phrases, his pathetic half-lines, giving utterance, as the voice of Nature herself, to that pain and weariness, yet hope of better things, which is the experience of her children in every time.

That is the purest humanism. It is the classic tradition carried in a mind fitted by nature and by long training to live in the clear air of the antique world. It is, or was until yesterday, the finest flower of our education. It characterizes the more open nurture of the Anglican church. Yet all this Newman was to surrender, borne away by the narrower and intenser current of medievalism, to his own and our incalculable loss. You may hear his recantation in the chapter on "Christianity and Letters" in *The Idea of a University:*

And while we thus recur to Greece and Athens with pleasure and affection, and recognize in that famous land the source and the school of intellectual culture, it would be strange indeed if we forgot to look further south also, and there to bow before a more glorious luminary, and a more sacred oracle of truth, and the source of another sort of knowledge, high and supernatural, which is seated in Palestine. Jerusalem is the fountain-head of religious knowledge, as Athens is of secular.

The English priest's language is suaver than was that of the Italian pope from whom I have already quoted, but beneath the surface he is saying nothing different from the haughty and rude

Gregory: "One goes to the Philistines to sharpen one's plow, because secular learning is needed as a training for Christian preaching."

This, then, is the paradox of Oxford. It is a thing of the past, you will say, and came to an end soon after the departure of Newman for his spiritual Rome. So in a way, at least as things are tending, it is, and there's the pity of it. The world could not forever rest the higher elements of its civilization on ideas which are mutually destructive — on the one side the human ideal of development through self-government in accordance with the law of the Golden Mean, on the other that of salvation through self-surrender and ascetic virtue — and in these latter years, having freed ourselves from unquestioning submission to authority, we have eased ourselves of the difficulty of reconciling the two traditions by throwing over the past altogether as a criterion of life. The classics have pretty well gone, and if we study them at all it is as if they were dead languages, useful it may be as a gymnastic discipline for the mind and a source of uncontaminated beauty, but with little or no sense that they contain a body of human experience and tried wisdom by which we may still guide our steps as we stumble upon the dark ways of this earth. And so, however our churches may lift their spires into the air and however our priests may repeat the sacrifice of the Eucharist, for the

world at large the medieval meaning of atonement and the binding force of these symbols have been forgotten or are fast forgetting. Some consolation they may give and some hope they may offer, but it is largely through their æsthetic appeal, and the law of God is not in them. In place of the secular tradition of the classics we have turned to science, and in place of obedience to the will of God we are seeking for salvation in humanitarian sympathy with our brother men. And these things are well in their way, but they do not supply, and can never supply, the comfort and elevation of the other disciplines. Science, with all its perspicacity, can see no place within its scheme for what is after all the heart of humanity and the source of true humanism — the consciousness of something within us that stands apart from material law and guides itself to ends of happiness and misery which do not belong to nature. And humanitarianism, however it may be concerned with human destinies and however it may call upon our emotions, leaves out of account the deep thirst of the soul for the infinite wells of peace; it has forgotten the scriptural promise of peace and the truth which St. Augustine knew: "*Quia fecisti nos ad te et inquietum est cor nostrum, donec requiescat in te* — For thou hast made us for thyself, and our heart cannot be quieted until it resteth in thee."

No, there is a great lack in our life to-day,

which we feel and secretly acknowledge to ourselves, despite much bragging of progress and much outward scorn of the things we have cast away. There is no need to expatiate on this fact; but for those who feel the lack, there is urgent need to consider the means at our disposal for restoring some part of what has been lost. And first of all there can be no sound restoration unless we can escape that paradox of civilization symbolized by the stones of Oxford. Now one relief from the dilemma is obvious and sure: we can sacrifice one of the opposing traditions entirely and cling to the other. And for my part, if it is necessary, I am ready to throw overboard all that has come to us from the Middle Ages. The gain for education would in some directions be clear and immediate. To leave Anglo-Saxon to a few specialists and to cut it out of the common curriculum designed for discipline and culture would have happy results in the study of English; to waive the remote and doubtful benefits of Gothic and the old Romance dialects for Goethe and Racine and others who carried on the classical tradition would be a fruitful saving of time.

No doubt there would be a great loss also to reckon with in such a choice. If nothing else, the literature of Christianity is a vast storehouse of intense and purifying passion from which each of us may draw and supply the meagreness of his individual emotions. You remember the scene

at Ostia on the Tiber, when Augustine with his mother, who was now approaching the end of this life, stood alone together at the window looking into a garden, and talked of the things that are to be. And at the last of their speech they turned to the joy that should ravish the soul and swallow it up, when the tumults of the flesh were silenced, and the images of the earth and the waters and the air were silenced, and the poles of the sky were silent, and the very heart grew still to itself, and all dreams and visionary revelations, and every tongue and every sign were hushed in silence; and as they thus spoke the rapture of heaven came so near that this world was lost for them in contempt — *et mundus iste nobis inter verba vilesceret cum omnibus delectationibus suis*. That is the deep emotion that was passed from man to man and from soul to soul through the devastations of the Middle Ages, and with it the ecstatic cry of the saintly mother, "*Quid hic facio* — What do I here?" It may be perilous, or morbid, but it is deep and real, and beside this religious rapture the ordinary pleasures of life are incomparably cheap and mean. For those who have not imprisoned themselves in the life of the present, the sermons of St. Bernard, the great prayers and hymns of the Church, even the austere dialectic of Thomas Aquinas, are a reservoir from which we may still draw that celestial and intoxicating drink. There are some of us —

I confess that I myself am such a one — for whom, because of temperament or training, the closing of that source would mean an irreparable loss. Yet we are so impressed by a greater need of the world, that we are ready to lay iconoclastic hands on the whole fabric of the Middle Ages and to sweep it away altogether, with all its good and all its evil. It may be that no such harsh procedure is necessary. Indeed, as I have said, the medieval tradition, so far as our schools are concerned, has come to have so little vital force, it is so much a mere *cadaver* for the seminar, that in advocating its elimination from the common curriculum, we shall scarcely be doing violence to anything useful or sacred. It is possible, furthermore, that, if ever we have another renaissance in our education and the past is taken up again as a living and creative power in the imagination, some means may be discovered to effect that reconciliation between the classical and medieval views which the earlier Renaissance desired but could not find.

But that is more or less chimerical. What lies at our hands, and what I believe thoughtful men are more and more beginning to recognize as imperative for our higher intellectual and artistic life, is a clear understanding of the paradoxical nature of the bases upon which education has until recently stood, with the consequences thereof, and a return, if possible, to pure classical

tradition and discipline. I am aware that this recognition is still of a vague and ineffective sort, while in practice Greek is certainly losing ground day by day and Latin is scarcely gaining. But a good deal of futile-seeming talk has before now preceded an actual revolution, and who shall say that the tide may not turn at any hour and the classics which we praise and neglect may not almost suddenly step into their own again? At any rate it behooves those who are now teaching Greek and Latin, with a feeling of despair perhaps, to lay to heart what hope they can, and to make sure that, when the change comes, if it do indeed come, they may be found ready and fully prepared to give the world what it needs. Meanwhile they have a plain task and duty. It may seem vague and impractical to talk of maintaining a tradition for some future change in the whole trend of a civilization; there is at least something clear and close at hand which the teacher can do, and which may confer a benefit upon himself and upon what earnest pupils he has.

In the first place, those who are teaching can effect a certain reform in their methods. We have gained a good deal from German scholarship, but we have also lost something. Let us, if we can, retain the diligence and accuracy which have come from the German seminar, but let us remember that the tendency of the past century has been to make of the classics a closed field

for the investigating specialist and to draw the attention away from their value as an imperishable body of literature. That evil has been recognized, and we are trying to remedy it. But at the present time we may be led astray by what may seem in itself a peculiar advantage to the classicist — I mean the discovery of a vast body of Greek writing which lies so to speak on the outskirts of literature, and the unearthing of great archæological treasures. These things are undoubtedly good in themselves, and they may be used to give a vividness and reality to ancient life such as we have never had. But they contain also a real danger. After all, these inscriptions and discoveries scarcely touch on what is the vital classical tradition — the interpretation of the human heart and those glimpses into the destinies for which we go to Homer and Sophocles and Plato and Lucretius and Virgil. It is possible that archæology may throw the emphasis on the wrong place and obscure the true issues. I say then, with due deference to those who have more authority to speak than I have, that the first thing to do is to see that archæology, valuable and interesting as it is, be kept in its proper relative place, and be not allowed to dazzle our eyes by the wonder of its discoveries.

What we need chiefly is a deeper knowledge and finer understanding of those few authors who

are really the classics. We need to reassure ourselves that as pure human literature they still stand supreme and unapproached. I for one am ready to avow my opinion, and I believe that no great advance in the classics is possible until this belief is proclaimed boldly and generally, that the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* have a beauty and humanity that no modern epic poet has ever touched — not Milton himself, though I adore Milton this side idolatry. There is no lyric poetry in modern tongues that has the music and exquisite feeling of Sappho's Lesbian songs, or the soaring strength of Pindar's impassioned vision. No one else has ever quite caught again the mellow suavity of Horace. No later philosopher has translated the eternal verities into such perfect speech as Plato. I have seen Edwin Booth in *Lear* and *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*, and felt the grip of Shakespeare at my very heart. But I have seen a band of young amateurs present the *Agamemnon* in the Stadium at Harvard, and through the crudeness of their acting and the helplessness of the chorus and the disadvantage of a language I could scarcely follow, I still knew that here was a higher form of drama than anything on the modern stage, and that the art of Æschylus was profounder and more everlasting in its emotional appeal than Shakespeare's even.

The teacher who desires to impress his pupils with the value and greatness of classical literature

must first feel those qualities himself. He may, perhaps, think that my estimation of the ancient poets is relatively overdrawn, though I mean to speak only my sober conviction, but he must at least read those poets, read and read, and steep his mind in their images and phrases. But it is even more important, as things now are, that he should ponder the ideas that underlie the ancient poets and philosophers, their ethical interpretation of individual and social experience, not only as these ideas are expressed directly and didactically, but more particularly in that glancing and suggestive manner which is appropriate to all great literature. For, frankly, if a man is not convinced that the classics contain a treasure of practical and moral wisdom which is imperatively needed as a supplement to the one-sided theories of the present day and as a corrective of much that is distorted in our views, he had better take up some other subject to teach than Greek or Latin. The subject is too large and debatable to deal with in a paragraph. But two famous stanzas from Wordsworth and Coleridge, who did more than any other poets to fashion the higher ethical feeling of the age, may give a hint of where the discussion would lead. You may guess the stanza from Wordsworth:

> One impulse from a vernal wood
> May teach you more of man,
> Of moral evil and of good,
> Than all the sages can.

Literally taken the idea of these lines is, of course, sheer humbug, and Wordsworth no doubt wrote them in a vein of playfulness; but after all they agree with a good deal of the easy philosophy of the century, and they are the precise poetical equivalent of the scientific study of nature which has displaced the humanities. The other stanza is from *The Ancient Mariner:*

> He prayeth best, who loveth best
> All things both great and small;
> For the dear God who loveth us,
> He made and loveth all.

The sentiment, you will say, is innocent and pious enough, but it points unmistakably to the other tendency of the day, that humanitarian notion of indistinguishing sympathy which is rapidly becoming the religion of the people and the theme of serious literature to the exclusion of other ideals. Now, it is perfectly plain that the whole influence of classical literature is against the exaggeration of these naturalistic and humanitarian tendencies. Consider the meaning of one of Pindar's odes, or of Horace's epistles, or reflect on the ethics of Aristotle; the emphasis is everywhere on distinctions and judgment in place of sympathy, and on the grave responsibility of the individual man for the conduct of his own soul in its relation to the unseen and eternal laws. Bacchylides in one brief memorable phrase has summed up the wisdom of his people: ὅσια δρῶν

εὔφραινε θυμόν — "doing what is right in the eyes of heaven, make glad your soul." Unless the teacher is convinced that the pregnant meaning of those words may be used, and should be used, as a corrective of the naturalistic and humanitarian exaggerations of our day, he had better devote his energy to some other subject.

I am assuming, you see, that the classics contain in themselves an ideal capable of relieving us from the undue predominance of both the scientific philosophy and the humanitarianism of the day, but you may raise a doubt at this point. It is clear, you will say, that the humanism of the classics may be used to offset the inhumanity of our scientific absorption, but what have they to offer to balance the humanitarian absorption in comfort and the things of this world? How can they alone give us back what we have lost with the disappearance of the medieval belief in the infinite, omnipotent deity? This question has been particularly forced upon my mind by reading a book from Oxford, by Mr. R. W. Livingstone, in support of the classical propaganda. Formerly it seemed sufficient to dwell on the æsthetic superiority of Greek art and literature, but of recent years that appeal has been reinforced by an attempt to set forth the ethical and practical value of Greek ideas for men to-day in the distraction of our own civilization. And so Mr. Livingstone calls his volume of essays *The Greek*

Genius and Its Meaning to Us. The change is well, and may have its effect in time, though at present the new appeal may seem to fall on deaf ears.

Mr. Livingstone is right also in seeing that the crux of the matter is in the sense to be attached to the word "humanism." "There are few more important problems than this," he declares; "is humanism right? Is it right to take a purely human attitude towards life, to assume that man is the measure of all things, and to believe that, even though the unseen may be there, still we can know our duty and live our life without reference to it? That is perhaps the biggest question of the present day." The problem, so far as it goes, could not be stated more vigorously, and no one can read Mr. Livingstone's exposition of Greek humanism without pleasure and enlargement of mind. Yet in the end it is not quite plain that he has grasped the full force of the word. Certain writers, among whom not the least guilty is Professor Schiller, a philosophical Fellow of his own college, Corpus Christi, have deliberately clouded the meaning of "humanism" by confusing it with "humanitarianism," which is in fact its very opposite, and it is not clear that Mr. Livingstone, who may be taken as the spokesman of a common tendency among scholars, has escaped entirely from this entanglement. His praise of the Sophists as the true exponents of

humanism, his acceptance of Nietzsche's sharp distinction between the Dionysian and Apollonian aspects of Greek civilization, his emphasis on the exotic side of Plato, and his rejection of Sophocles as the norm of Athenian genius are sufficient at least to raise a doubt in one's mind. "Man is the measure of all things" — no doubt that is humanism; it rejects the unseen and the infinite in so far as these are conceived to be superhuman or antihuman, and in this way it is antagonistic to the whole scope of medievalism; it rejects the superhuman, and, in a sense, the supernatural, but he is far from understanding its full scope who supposes that it necessarily excludes also the higher, even the divine, elements of the human soul itself. The error is not new. The Greeks gave us the sense of beauty, is an old saying, but they did so by limiting themselves to the finite laws of harmony and proportion; as a compensation the Middle Ages gave us the contrasted sense of the infinite. The most eloquent and authoritative expression of this view is Renan's famous Prayer on the Acropolis, in his *Souvenirs d'enfance et de jeunesse*. Standing on that citadel of the old Athenian faith, with the marvellous ruins of the Parthenon before his eyes, he uttered his adoration of the Goddess Athena:

> O nobility! O simple and true beauty! Deity whose cult signifies reason and wisdom, thou whose temple is an eternal lesson in conscience and sincerity, I come late

to the threshold of thy mysteries. To find thee there were needed for me endless studies. The invitation which thou gavest to the Athenian at his birth with a smile, I have conquered only by reflection and at the price of long labour....

Dost thou remember that day, under the archonship of Dionysodorus, when a little ugly Jew, speaking the Greek of Syria, came hither, passed over thy sacred place, read thy inscriptions without understanding, and found in thy enclosure an altar, as he thought, dedicated to *the unknown God?* Ah well, this little Jew has won the day; for a thousand years thou, O Truth, wast treated as an idol; for a thousand years the world was a desert wherein no flower grew.... Goddess of order, image of the steadfastness of heaven, to love thee was accounted a sin, and to-day, now that by painful toil we have come nearer to thee, we are accused of committing a crime against the spirit of man....

The world shall not be saved except it return to thee and repudiate its barbarian bonds.

So far our scholar goes in his praise of the spotless and radiant beauty of Athena, and then, as the surge of medievalism flows back on him, he turns to its symbol in the great vault of St. Sophia at Byzantium with a cry of homesickness: "A great wave of forgetfulness carries us into a gulf without name. O abyss, thou art the only God!" (*O abîme, tu es le Dieu unique!*).

Now the application of this contrast between orderly finite beauty and the infinite conceived as a formless abyss, this opposition of the human and the divine, is doubly false. The Greeks have had no monopoly of the sense of beauty on the

one hand, and on the other hand their submission to the laws of harmony by no means excludes that religious exaltation which we call, for lack of a better name, the infinite. Their great creation, their unique contribution to the world, was just the union of beauty and religious exaltation in forms which remain normally human — that, indeed, is humanism in the highest meaning of the word. If a man doubts the uniqueness of this gift he can easily persuade himself by looking at the Elgin marbles, which stood once on the Parthenon before which Renan uttered his prayer, and by comparing them with what he may see elsewhere of art and religious decoration. It is, more particularly, a dull soul that can stand before those weather-worn blocks of stone, commonly called the Three Fates, or even look upon their pictured likeness, and not feel, along with their wonder of sheer beauty, the strange lift and thrill of emotion, the mystery of deep opening within the heart to deep, which Renan professed to feel before the *abîme*. There are inestimable treasures of beauty that owe nothing to Greece, there are, on the other hand, idols and temples everywhere which strike the beholder with awe; but this human sublimity will scarcely be found elsewhere in the world, or if found, whether in the Western Renaissance or in the Buddhistic art of the Far East, can be traced somehow to the influence of Greece. Wherever this influence has

not passed, you will see a divorce between measured human beauty and religious exaltation, and an attempt to express the infinite by symbols that are either exaggerated or grotesque or merely vague. The Hindu who wishes to image the divine wisdom will carve an idol with many heads, or if he wishes to set forth the divine power, will give to his god a hundred arms. The men of the Middle Ages knew well enough what was beautiful, but when they undertook to visualize the saint they made him meagre and unlovely. Even the cathedrals seek the impression of sublimity by spaces and lines that overwhelm the worshipper with the sense of his abject littleness; they may be beautiful, but they are not human. Goethe could create beauty, but when, in his romantic and medieval mood, he thought of the power which speaks to us so humanly in the Three Fates he could only express it in the vague and grotesque symbolism of the mystic Mothers.

The true humanism, which speaks in the stones of the Parthenon, does not possess authority and saving power because the human is there regarded as excluding the divine, but the very contrary. The Elgin marbles merely put into visible form the philosophy of Plato, who looked into the human soul for the infinite, and found its effects there in the formative power of ideas; they express the same truth which Aristotle taught in his *Ethics*, that virtue is the golden mean of self-

control rather than any excess of self-sacrifice, but that the golden mean is rightly known only to him who desires in contemplation to behold the unmoved, all-moving unity. If we forget this composite meaning of humanism, we shall confuse it either with the formalism of the pseudo-classics, or with the sentiment of modern humanitarianism.

I do not presume to say that the opposition between the classical and medieval traditions may not in some way be reconciled, or that the paradox symbolized for us in the stones of Oxford is forever insoluble. But I am sure that for those who believe that no great art and no sure comfort for the questing human spirit can come from an education based overwhelmingly on science and humanitarianism, and who hope for a regeneration of the vivifying ideals of the past — I am sure that for such as these the one practical course is to steep their own minds in the great and proved writers of the ancient world, to nourish their inner life on that larger humanism which embraces the spiritual as well as the æsthetic needs of mankind, and then, if they be teachers of the classics, simply to teach as they can, omitting nothing of rigid discipline, however repellent that discipline may be, but giving also to the pupil from the overflowing fullness of their faith and joy.

JUSTICE

JUSTICE

(*Justitia quid est? Animus quodammodo se habens.* — SENECA.)

IT is an odd but undeniable state of things that a writer should feel a certain need of apology when he asks his readers to consider with him such a topic as that which stands at the head of this essay. For, after all, no other subject of debate, I suppose, is so perennially interesting and fruitful as the definition of the abstract virtues. That at least was the opinion of Socrates long ago, when he told his friends of the market place that he should like nothing better than to pass his whole life long in this kind of conversation; and any one who reads the newspapers to-day ought to know that, despite our apparent disdain of such themes, we really have the same insatiable curiosity towards them. What else is all our ocean of print about the present war but an effort to fix the responsibility for its origin where it justly belongs? And what else is our discussion of the national traits of the various combatants, our talk of militarism, liberty, culture, humanitarianism, efficiency, and the like, but an endeavour to arrive at a clear definition of that virtue of justice upon which civilization itself is thought to hang?

Now, in a way, justice is easily defined: It is the act of right distribution, the giving to each man his due. Nobody will question this definition; but obviously, also, it carries us nowhere until we have further defined what is *right* and *due*, and have discovered some criterion by which we may know that a particular act in the conduct of life falls within our general definition.

The impulse of the modern man will be to look for an objective standard of justice in the law and operation of nature in the animate world; and, immediately or inferentially, he will find there what he seeks. He will observe first of all a great variety of creatures and species existing side by side. He will next be impressed by the fact that they differ one from another in their similarity or dissimilarity to himself, and in their power of satisfying his own sense of fitness and value. He will see that among these creatures and species a struggle for existence, sometimes open and sometimes disguised, now violent and now gentle, is going on, and apparently has been going on for an immeasurable space of time; and he will instinctively give a kind of approbation when that creature or species prevails to which he attributes the greater measure of fitness or value, and which he calls the higher, as being in some way nearer to himself. In general it will seem to him that in the course of nature the stronger, which prevail over the weaker, are also, as he judges, the higher.

This common process of survival he will call evolution, and its law will appear to him to be formulated in the axiom: Might makes right. To both of the meanings implied in these words, viz., that might *is* right, as being the higher in the order of nature, and that might *has* the right to develop at the expense of the weaker, his reason will assent, and, in its first motion at least, will assent without reservation.

But there is another aspect of evolution which will be forced on the observer's attention. This process of subduing or eliminating the weaker creature or species is often accompanied with suffering. It cannot be pleasant for the less vigorous animal, when food is scarce, that the sturdier should gobble up whatever is in sight, and leave him to starve. Nor do we suppose that it is altogether sport for the little fish to be chased by the big fish. Sometimes the law of might acts by what has the appearance of deliberate torture. Any one who has studied the habits of pigeons in a dovecot will have seen a typical example of Nature's way of dealing with weakness. Let one of the flock suffer an injury or fall ill, and he is forthwith made the victim of downright persecution. Instead of pity, his comrades are filled with a kind of rage, striking him with beak and wing and driving him away to die in solitude.

Now our reason may tell us that all this is a

necessary factor of evolution, and must occur if the higher creatures are to prevail over the lower. But besides reason we have feelings, and, however we may admire the widespread benevolence of Nature, from at least part of her operations our instinctive sympathy with suffering is bound to withhold its assent; we are bound to regard them as painful, and they may even seem malicious. Seeing these things, so impassionate an observer as Charles Darwin could be forced to exclaim: "What a book a Devil's-Chaplain might write on the clumsy, wasteful, blundering, low, and horribly cruel works of Nature." If, in judging the procedure of evolution, reason says that might makes right, feeling will often reply that weakness makes right, in the sense of having right, even when not being right.

Our attitude towards Nature is thus complex. Her work in a way, as Walpole used to say of the life of man, is a comedy to him who thinks, and a tragedy to him who feels. When the difference between two competitors is great, our reason predominates, and we feel little sympathy for the lower; our feeling may even side with reason against the sufferer. Certain creatures, whether because they are remote from us in the scale of being or because they are elusive enemies of our comfort, so affect us with disgust that we are quite ready to acquiesce in their torture. There is a joy for most men in destroying vermin and

seeing it writhe in agony. No good American would feel compunction for the pangs of the brown-tailed or the gypsy moth, if some entomologist should discover and let loose a parasite to prey on the vitals of those pests. But when suffering comes to creatures higher up and nearer to us, we cry out that Nature is malign; and when our own welfare demands the death or discomfort of such creatures, we are likely to become apologetic, if not remorseful. There is "complicity in the shambles," as Emerson says, and so unbalanced men argue that meat is baleful, and run to vegetarianism and other expedients to escape the inevitable law of evolution. Fanatics in India have carried this repulsion so far as to make it a point of religion to strain all the water they drink, lest some living organism should inadvertently be swallowed, and to sweep the ground before them lest some insect should be trodden under foot. With them sympathy altogether outruns reason.

We see, therefore, that into our judgment of Nature two elements enter, and that our sense of justice demands the satisfaction both of our reason and of our feelings. And we see also that there is nothing in the actual procedure of Nature which would indicate any regard on her part for our judgment. When we consider the persistent preservation of many low forms of life whose welfare means for mankind only disease and misery, we

are almost driven to doubt whether the end of evolution is even such as to satisfy our reason; and, without any doubt at all, the method of evolution is often repugnant to our most instinctive feelings. The fact is: the very idea of justice or injustice has no real application to Nature. She proceeds by a law and for a purpose of her own, and to judge her by our human standard, as we inevitably do if we judge her at all, is a pure fallacy. Our approval will not influence her a whit; not all our clamours will move her to relent. She will continue to warm us at the fires of life to-day, and to-morrow will ravage our cities with earthquake and conflagration. She moves on her way, impassionate and unconcerned, with sublime indifference to our creeds — the great mother at whose breasts we have clung. And we, if we are wise, will curb our resentment equally with our commendation; knowing that "ill is our anger with things, since it concerns them not at all," —

> Τοῖς πράγμασιν γὰρ οὐχὶ θυμοῦσθαι χρεών·
> μέλει γὰρ αὐτοῖς οὐδέν.

But there is another lesson to be learned from the indifference of Nature besides the need of regarding her works with corresponding detachment. The very impertinence of applying our moral standards there where they are so openly disregarded is a proof that our sense of justice is not derived from watching her calm method of dealing with her own, but springs from some-

thing within our breasts that is not subject to her sway, — from a law, that is, that transcends the material law of evolution, being, if we use words strictly, not natural at all, but supernatural. Huxley was right and knew of what he spoke when he declared that our moral ideas have no relation to the doctrine of evolution.

Nevertheless, though we are debarred from the hope of finding in Nature an objective standard by which we can regulate our conduct, the manner in which we inevitably apply our idea of justice to the animate world is a clear indication of the character and composition of that idea. By analyzing the demands laid by us upon Nature we can see more plainly than by mere introspection what the condition of justice in the soul itself must be — rather, perhaps, the mind unaccustomed to the painful labour of self-study can here see itself magnified, so to speak, and projected upon a screen. Our idea of justice would be fulfilled if we saw that Nature satisfied two different faculties, or kinds of activity, of the soul — the reason, which demands that what is the stronger and more like itself should prevail, and the feelings, which demand that the higher should prevail with no suffering, but with the happy acquiescence, of the lower. And so we infer that the soul itself would be in this ideal state if the relation of its own members satisfied these demands. We reach, therefore, a clear definition of

justice: it is that government and harmonious balance of the soul which arises when reason prevails over the feelings and desires, and when this dominance of the reason is attended with inner joy and consenting peace; it is the right distribution of power and honour to the denizens within the breast of the individual man.

The definition is not new, but was known of old to philosophers and poets who held it sufficient to look within themselves for moral guidance, with no thought of seeking in the inhumanities of Nature for corroboration of their faith. You will find such a portrait of the just man drawn at full length by Plutarch in his life of Aristides, whose righteous decisions swerved "neither for good will nor for friendship, neither for wrath nor for hatred," and upon whom we are told that all the spectators at a play once turned their eyes on hearing the poet's praise of a hero:

> For not to seem but to be just he seeks,
> And from deep furrows in the mind to reap
> Harvest of ripe and noble counselling.

And Shakespeare draws the same portrait from a slightly different angle:

> For thou hast been
> As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing;
> A man that fortune's buffets and rewards
> Hast ta'en with equal thanks; and blest are those
> Whose blood and judgment are so well commingled
> That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger
> To sound what stop she please.

These have been the commonplaces of self-knowledge, and have needed no confirmation from without; but we are children of another age, and must see wisdom with our eyes and learn truth through our ears. And so we may profit by carrying the analogy of evolution a little further.

What we call the injustice of evolution is due to the fact that the struggle in Nature is always between two distinct and different organisms, and that therefore the prevalence of the one is likely to be at the expense of the other. Hence we should infer, as indeed we know from quite other lines of argument, that, if the idea of justice can be realized in the soul, this is because the faculties of the soul are not separate entities but merely different members of one and the same entity. And so, looking into our experience, we find the matter to be. We find, that is, that as the attainment of justice means the subordination of one part of the soul to another, it is accompanied with the manifest satisfaction of the reason, and at the same time not infrequently with mortification of the feelings. We can have the approval of conscience only by controlling and, on occasion, denying a stream of desires which spring up in the breast and clamour for free course; and this act of control, when it is exercised in the form of denial, is necessarily attended with some degree of pain. If that were all, the analogy between nature and the soul would be complete —

but with contrary results. For, whereas nature appears on the whole to go her own way serenely, sacrificing the lower of her creatures to the higher with no care for the pain she may inflict, or, rather, scattering pleasure and pain with impartial hand, in man the consequence would be a repudiation of justice altogether, and the surrender to the desires of his heart, with no thought of moral progress. It is absurd to suppose that any man in his senses would sacrifice his pleasures and voluntarily inflict pain upon himself. Humanity would not place itself in the position of a Brutus, who, having striven all his life to act justly, and having found that fortune took no account of his principles, was ready to leave it all with the bitter cry: "O miserable virtue! thou art but a word, and I have been following thee as a real thing!" It is no answer to say that, even in the balance of pleasure and pain, justice in the end is profitable. If the truth is so, as it may well be in the sum of time, that consummation seems so far away, and often takes so little account of the individual, as to afford but a feeble counterweight to the urgency of many immediate desires. Were there nothing beyond this, justice would be admired perhaps, but scarcely practiced. Nor is it sufficient to hold that the desires will be checked by the stronger desire to enjoy the good opinion of one's fellows. There is the old fable, which has troubled the moralists for

thousands of years, of Gyges, who by means of a magic ring could make himself invisible, and so fulfil all the lusts of the flesh while retaining the reputation of virtue. In a lesser degree that power is within the reach of every man.

No, we have another motive to justice besides the calculation of pleasures or the force of public opinion, a law of reward and punishment that does not follow afar off on limping feet, but is ever at the side of the man when he acts, rather is within him, is his very self. The just man may be, and often is, torn by the conflict between the knowledge that he is satisfying the demands of his reason and the feeling of pain that arises from the suppression of certain desires, but the soul of the just man is nevertheless one soul, not two souls, however it may be divided against itself; and besides the feelings of pleasure and pain that trouble one of its members, he has another feeling, greater and more intimate, that belongs to his soul as a unit. This is the feeling of happiness, which is not the same as pleasure, and may exist in the absence of pleasure, and despite the presence of pain; and opposed to it is the feeling of misery, which is not the same as pain, and may exist in the absence of pain, and despite the presence of pleasure. It is not easy to explain these things, it may be impossible to analyse them satisfactorily; but we know that they are so. History is replete with illustrations of this strange

fact, and he who weighs his own experience honestly will find it there also, that a man conscious of doing what he believes is right, may be lifted up into a supreme happiness, against which the infliction of pain, though it be torture to the death, is as nothing. And so a man may enjoy all the pleasures that this world can give, yet suffer a misery for which the only relief is madness. Philosophy and history together have given a peculiar fame to the letter sent by Tiberius to the Roman Senate from the luxuries of Capreæ: "May the gods and goddesses bring me to perish more miserably than I daily feel myself to be perishing, if I know what to write to you, Senators, or how to write, or what indeed not to write at this time." It is not only the mind of the tyrant which, if opened, would be found lacerated within by the wounds of passion and evil desires, as the body of a slave is lacerated by the scourge; every unjust man shall know that the misery of the whole soul is something different, not in degree but in kind, from the pain of thwarted desires. A great English artist who painted the portrait of one of the older generation of our railway financiers, whose name has become also a synonym for the reckless abuse of power, is said to have observed that the face of his sitter was the most miserable he had ever seen. Only the heart of the unjust man knoweth its own bitterness. And, in like manner, every just man shall know

that happiness is not a balance of pleasure against pain, but a feeling different in kind from pleasure. Happiness is a state of the whole soul, embracing both the faculties of reason, on the one hand, and of the desires, with the feelings of pleasure and pain, on the other hand; or, one might say, it is the state of some superior element of the soul, which finds its good in the harmonious action of those faculties. And it is because we discover no such higher unity in the field of Nature, where she can make compensation for the suffering of evolution, that we are debarred from applying the cannon of justice and injustice to her procedure.

And not only is happiness the reward of that deep spiritual health which we call justice, but it is the warrant and test of that condition as well. We may err in our judgment of what is right at any moment, and err sadly in the choice of those desires which we suppress and those to which we give free rein, and our errors may be clear at the time to those who are more enlightened than we are; we have no guide to practical wisdom in this world, save the oracles of experience that direct us by the flickering signals of pleasure and pain. But we have a sure monitor of the will to act righteously in the present feeling of happiness or misery, and we have a hope — a divine illusion it may be, for it has never among men been verified by experience — that in some way and at

some time happiness and pleasure shall be completely reconciled by Nature, who, by mysterious deviations beyond our mortal ken, is herself also a servant of the law of justice. And so, if we were right in defining justice as the inner state of the soul when, under the command of the will to righteousness, reason guides and the desires obey, we can express the same truth in this brief equation of experience: *We seek justice for the sake of happiness, and we are just when we are happy;* or, more briefly still: *Justice is happiness, happiness is justice.*

But man is a political animal. His life is closely knit with that of his fellows, and it is not enough to trace the meaning of justice to a state of the isolated soul; we must consider how this virtue bears on the conduct of a man among men, in society. Now, we might be content to say that a man is just in his conduct when, having attained to equilibrium of his own faculties, he acts in such a way as ought to produce in others the same condition; and this indeed is the sum of the law in the unrestrained dealing of a man with his neighbour. But society is something more than the spontaneous association of free units; it is an organization with traditions and government, necessary to it for the reason that it is made up of individuals who, not being infallibly just and wise, must be guided and constrained by a con-

ventional code of relations. Hence there is a social justice of the community which complements, or even supplants, the conscience of the individual, as there is in the same sense a social injustice. Manifestly the problem here is far more complicated than when it is isolated in the individual soul.

Abstractly, no doubt, the definition of this social justice is simple and ready at hand. Society is composed of men who vary in the degree of individual justice to which they have attained, some being by disposition and training more self-governed, more rational, than others. By an inevitable analogy, therefore, we extend to society the idea of justice learned from our personal experience, precisely as we extended it to Nature. We cannot, in fact, do otherwise, since this is the only idea of justice possible to us. We think that society would be justly organized if its members were related to one another in the same manner as the faculties within the breast of the just man. The application of the analogy to nature showed that progress was obtained there not by justice at all, but by the operation of a law which in our human arrogance we often condemned as unjust. What shall we find in society?

Here, first of all, we come into conflict with two opposite theories of social justice which are as old almost as history, and which will doubtless go on flourishing as long as the human mind retains

its tendency to gravitate to the indolent simplicity of extremes. One of these theories passes now under the name of Nietzsche, who sums it up in the famous maxim: *unusquisque tantum juris habet quantum potentia valet.* If we are impelled by present circumstances to abhor such a conception of social justice, we should at least remember that it is no startling creation of a logic-ridden madman, but was promulgated in all its essentials by various sophists and politicians several hundred years before the Christian era, if it does not go back to brother Cain himself. Nietzsche, however, derives his principle avowedly from the apparent procedure of evolution. He approves of that procedure without reservation and converts the law of might into a criterion of social justice because he judges the acts of Nature by the reason alone, regarding pity as the last temptation of the sage. His theory is falsified by a double error: it supposes that mankind will be willing to base its conduct on an idea of justice derived from natural evolution, and in despite of that inner consciousness which demands the satisfaction of both the reason and the feelings; and it assumes that social progress guided by strength and reason alone, whether possible or not, would be towards the higher, because happier, life. And even thus, I am taking Nietzsche on his rational, or philosophic, side. In practice, as men are made, Nietzscheism would not result in the control of reason,

but would give loose rein to a particular group of desires, the *libido dominandi*. There is this real inconsistency in the system, but for purposes of illustration I am justified in isolating one aspect of it. Nietzsche's "will to power" does in theory demand the prevalence of those individuals whose survival in evolution meets with the approval of reason, however in effect it might mean the predominance of the inferior type.

The other theory springs from the same tendency of the mind to sink to extremes, suffering in this case the attraction of the feelings. It has various names, humanitarianism, socialism, equalitarianism, — masquerading in as many a lovely *ism*, or *isme*, or *ismus* as any other international mania, and sometimes arrogating to itself the more plausible title of democracy. Neither is this theory essentially new, whatever superficial development it may have taken on in recent times. When Solon was chosen to reform the Athenian Constitution, a current saying of his, that "equality breeds no war," flattered the turbulent populace into acquiesence because they took the word "equality" in its absolute sense. Whereas in reality Solon was thinking of fair proportion, and on this principle reduced the oppression of the rich, while refusing to the poor an equalitarian Constitution. He saw, as we must see to-day, that the ideal of absolute equality is not only impossible in practice, but is contrary to our sense

of justice. It is false and one-sided, being based on the exclusive appeal of the feelings, just as Nietzscheism is, theoretically, based on the claim of the reason. We think there is a higher and a lower in the scale of nature, we are conscious of reason and feeling in our own souls, we observe a similar distribution of characters in society. It would be pleasant, no doubt, to feel that every man had all his desires gratified, but reason, which is the faculty of seeing distinctions, binds us to believe that the State cannot progress in the orderly manner of evolution unless there, as in Nature, a certain advantage of honour accrues to those individuals who are themselves governed by reason, with the privilege of imposing their will upon those who, from the rational point of view, are inferior to them.

Social justice, then, is neither Nietzschean nor equalitarian. It is such a distribution of power and privilege, and of property as the symbol and instrument of these, as at once will satisfy the distinctions of reason among the superior, and will not outrage the feelings of the inferior. And if no precise rule can be given for striking this balance in law and institution, any more than an absolute code of morals can be formulated for the conduct of the individual, yet we have the same criterion for determining practically our progress towards this ideal as towards the ideal of individual justice. For there is a "pursuit of happi-

ness" which is the right of every society, and which differs totally in principle from the license of pleasure — a feeling, which, by permeating society, may in a measure transcend and reconcile the envious divisions of discontent. Social justice and personal justice are both measured by happiness.

Obviously the problem is rendered difficult in the State by various complications, and obviously it can never be perfectly solved there, as, within the limits of human frailty, it can be solved in the inner life of the individual. For society (and in this complication lies the sum of the whole matter) shares both the character of the individual soul, as being composed of souls, and the character of nature, as being fundamentally not a unit but a collection of units. The constitution of a just society, therefore, will inevitably have this double aspect: it will correspond to what is justice in the individual soul, and at the same time it will disturb us by admitting elements of that seeming oppression which we are wont to call injustice in the procedure of evolution, but which is really the fatal inhuman law of things. In other words, in aiming at a just State we must always, while men are men, act in such a way as will seem unjust to those who, judging for themselves, judge by the feelings alone. The duty of the legislator, under these circumstances, will be to enact laws which shall conform so far as possi-

ble with the idea of rational proportion, distributing the advantages of power and property in accordance with the claims of superiority indeed, but not by the demands of an arrogant egotism; and measuring the probabilities of superiority by the most practical means at his disposal.

And there is another function of equal importance with that of the legislator. It shall be the duty of the teacher and moralist to impart to men the knowledge and to instil into them the feeling that their own true happiness as individuals depends neither on the unpitying exercise of strength nor on the envious striving after equality, but is bound up with that social happiness which can exist only when each division of society, such as male and female, and each member of society, has a distinct place and responsibility, and is recognized and rewarded accordingly. There is in every breast a spark of reason and a gleam of that self-knowledge which is happiness. On this the moralist must depend for confirmation of his teaching. There were indeed no society at all, unless a voice within each of us, in all but those quite brutalized by the lust of pleasure, responded to the law that men must serve as well as command.

Of both lawgiver and teacher the work is one of mediation, as social justice is itself always a shifting compromise. But the first rule for both,

as the first and hardest lesson for each right-minded man in these days, is to discipline the heart to accept with equanimity the fatal fact that social justice must include a considerable amount of that disposition of Nature in dealing with her own which we, judging by the standard of the individual soul, are so ready to call injustice. The first step towards the equipoise of a soul just within itself is to recognize the necessity of a measure of injustice in the relation of man with man and with the world. We must learn from the god of realities how "ill is our anger with things, since it concerns them not at all."

PROPERTY AND LAW

PROPERTY AND LAW

THERE has been, as every one knows, a long strike in the mines of Colorado, with violence on both sides and bitter recriminations. On the 27th of April, 1914, there was a meeting of some two thousand persons in Carnegie Hall, of New York, before whom Morris Hillquit made this savage statement:

> The investment of the Rockefellers in the coal fields of Colorado is largely for the hiring of criminals and thugs to shoot the strikers, and the pious son of America's money king knows and sanctions the object. When it was alleged of ex-Lieutenant Becker [the convicted police officer of New York] that he had hired four gunmen to kill one gambler, he was indicted on the charge of murder in the first degree. Why not indict the man who has admittedly hired whole bands of gunmen to kill scores of workers?

In sympathy with this idea that in hiring men to protect his property a mine owner is in the same class with a sordid murderer, it will be recalled that a number of men and women paraded before the office of Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., wearing bands of crêpe. On April 28 Mr. Rockefeller issued an official reply, of which the gist was contained in the following paragraph:

> Are the labor unions, representing a small minority of the workers of the country, to be sustained in their dis-

regard of the inalienable right of every American citizen to work without interference, whether he be a union or a non-union man? Surely the vast majority of American citizens will, without fear or favor, stand for evenhanded justice under the Constitution, and equal rights for every citizen.

To this appeal the United Mine Workers responded the next day:

Of course the right to work is inherent. If, however, the miners exercise their rights as guaranteed by the Constitution and the laws of our country to have a collective voice in establishing the conditions under which they shall work or shall not work, it ought not and cannot be denied by Mr. Rockefeller.

In the same issue in which this response was published, the New York *Sun* printed a brief and pungent editorial, to this effect:

Whatever the demagogues prate, an elementary and indispensable and indefeasible right is at stake in Colorado. In defending that right to labor, in refusing to yield to timorous counsels from Washington, Mr. Rockefeller has shown civic courage and a just sense of the equal claim of all to liberty and protection.

Now in regard to the truth of the charges of violence and other misconduct urged alternately by the strikers and the owners and by their sympathizers, one may be unable to decide on the evidence; nor is that the question here considered. The remarkable point is that not a single word was uttered on either side for property itself, as at least a substantial element of civilization.

Such a silence was no doubt natural on the part of the strikers; but what of the owners? One suspects that Mr. Rockefeller, away from the Sunday school, and in his private office, thinks a good deal about the privileges of property, and one knows that the *Sun* is interested in those privileges. Yet for these neither Mr. Rockefeller nor the *Sun* would appear to have the slightest concern; they are only voluble in behalf of the independent labouring man and on the indefeasible rights of labour! Is this self-deception, or hypocrisy, or merely the policy of men who understand the feelings of a democratic populace, and desire to present their case in the most plausible light? A hundred years ago, in England or America at least, their present attitude would have been impossible; they would have appealed boldly to the public, their public, on the basis of sheer property rights. Twenty years ago such a position as they now assume could scarcely have been anything but ignoble hypocrisy. To-day their motives cannot be classified in any such simple fashion. It is not improbable that, along with the transparent motive of policy, they are a little troubled to know whether their instinctive feelings as property owners are not in some way unethical. At least we can say with entire confidence that such, under such circumstances, would be the complex state of mind of a considerable, certainly also a growing, body of men.

Now what is the meaning of all this? What is the origin of this state of mind which is so manifestly illogical and self-contradictory?

We shall perhaps discover the first plain enunciation of such a growing view of property in the writings of that master of truth and sophistry, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, especially in the *Discours sur l'origine de l'inégalité* and the *Contrat social.* According to the theory there developed, the most blessed stage of human existence was that exemplified by our North American Indians, who, as Rousseau pictured them from certain travellers' fairy tales, had risen to the beginning of social life, but possessed no property beyond the most rudimentary sort — none at all in our sense of the word. Happy indeed was such a state, if innocence is happiness: for, as the all-knowing Locke had observed, there can be no wrong-doing where there is no property. "It was," adds Rousseau sententiously, "the discovery of iron and grain that civilized men, and ruined the human race." Two consequences followed the creation of property: civilization and injustice. There is, Rousseau admits, a natural inequality of faculties among men, but this is of little moment until fixed and reinforced by extrinsic advantages. An unnatural inequality, or injustice, arises as soon as those who are the stronger by nature acquire increase of strength by the aid of superior pos-

sessions. And this injustice is fixed by a clever ruse. The few whose natural strength has been enhanced by property, seeing that they should still be at the mercy of the united mass of the poor and weak, delude the mass into binding themselves by passing laws in defence of property. Law is thus the support at once of civilization and of injustice.

The syllogism is rigid, and the inevitable conclusion would be: abolish law, and let mankind return to the happier condition of barbarism. But such a conclusion forces us to reconsider our premises, and we immediately see that the argument rests on two assumptions, one true and the other false. It is a fact that property has been the basis of civilization, and that with property there has come a change from natural inequality to what is assumed to be unnatural injustice. But it is not a fact that barbarism is in general a state of innocence and happiness. Rousseau himself really knew this, and he felt also, when his words began to be taken seriously by men of affairs, that he should be merely stultifying himself if he called on them to abolish what he recognized as the basis of civilized society: under no glamour of a remote paradise would men go to work deliberately to destroy civilization, whatever might be the evils it embraced.

Hence Rousseau proceeds to develop a theory of the State which shall retain the civilization

created by property, while avoiding the injustice inherent in it. To this end he would make *tabula rasa* of the existing forms of authority in government, and in their place introduce, as sole sovereign, a power which he describes as the *volonté générale*. By this he does not precisely mean socialism: for still regarding private ownership as the basis of civilization, he cannot admit collective ownership. His notion is that a government by means of the "general will," while acknowledging the need of private ownership, would do away with injustice, because, in such a State, "the sovereign, being formed only of the individuals which compose it, neither has nor can have any interest contrary to theirs." This may be a true proposition metaphysically, if, in the manner of the medieval realists, we regard the general idea of humanity as an active entity, and individual men as mere accidents. But what does the "general will," when stripped of its metaphysical disguises, mean for Rousseau? Nothing but the unrestricted desire of the majority at any given moment. Now we, who are the inheritors of the French Revolution and the humble audience of socialistic oratory, have seen the operation of a government, or at least have heard the demands of much applauded demagogues, close enough to the spirit of Rousseau's philosophy, to know what the immediate and unrestricted will of the majority means in practice. Whether it means jus-

tice to you or not, may depend on your particular sympathies and interests; it manifestly does not mean a careful regard for the rights of property.

Rousseau's scheme, in fact, involves a self-contradiction: by a juggling of words it supposes that the innocence of man in a state of nature, itself an assumption contrary to fact, can somehow be made to continue in a society which has built itself up on what he regards as the cause of injustice. In simple truth, property may rightly be called the cause of civilization, but, strictly speaking, it is only the occasion of injustice: injustice is inherent in the imperfection of man, and the development of the means of living merely brings into greater prominence what is an unavoidable feature of existence, not for man only but for the whole range of creation, in this puzzling world of ours. Rousseau, by inflaming the passions of men against the wrongs of society which by his own hypothesis are inevitable, was, and still is, the father of frightful confusions and catastrophes; but he performed a real service to philosophy by stating so sharply the bare truth that *property is the basis of civilization*.

The socialistic theories of communal ownership give the argument, I admit, a new turn. Socialism rests on two assumptions. First, that community of ownership will, for practical purposes, eliminate the greed and injustice of civi-

lized life. This I deny, believing it to be demonstrably false in view of the present nature of most men, and, I might add, in view of the notorious quarrelsomeness of the socialists among themselves. Secondly, that under community of control the material productivity of society will not be seriously diminished. This question I leave to the economists, though here too it would appear to follow demonstrably from the nature of man that the capacity to manage and the readiness to be managed are necessary to efficient production. Certainly, there has been a convincing uniformity in the way in which wealth and civilization have always gone together, and in the fact that wealth has accumulated only when private property was secure. So far as experience or any intelligent outlook goes, there is no sufficient motive for the creation of property but personal ownership, at least in a share of joint property. The burden of proof is entirely on those who assert the sufficiency of communal property; their theory has never been proved, but in innumerable experiments has always failed. And, in fact, the real strength of socialism, the force that some think is driving us along the edge of revolution, is in no sense a reasoned conviction that public ownership is better than private ownership, but rather a profound emotional protest against the inequalities of ownership. The serious question is not in regard to the importance of property,

but in regard to the justice of its present distribution. Despite all the chatter about the economic interpretation of history, we are to-day driven along by a sentiment, and by no consideration of economics.

Not even a Rousseau could cover up the fact of the initial inequality of men by the decree of that great Ruler, or Law, call it what you will, which makes one vessel for dishonour and another for honour. That is the so-called injustice of Nature. And it is equally a fact that property means the magnifying of that natural injustice into that which you may deplore as unnatural injustice, but which is a fatal necessity, nevertheless. This is the truth, hideous if you choose to make it so to yourself, not without its benevolent aspect to those, whether the favorites of fortune or not, who are themselves true — ineluctable at least. Unless we are willing to pronounce civilization a grand mistake, as, indeed, religious enthusiasts have ever been prone to do (and humanitarianism is more a perverted religion than a false economics), unless our material progress is all a grand mistake, we must admit, sadly or cheerfully, that any attempt by government or institution to ignore that inequality, may stop the wheels of progress or throw the world back into temporary barbarism, but will surely not be the cause of wider and greater happiness. It is not heartlessness, therefore, to reject the senti-

ment of the humanitarian, and to avow that the security of property is the first and all-essential duty of a civilized community. And we may assert this truth more bluntly, or, if you please, more paradoxically. Although, probably, the rude government of barbarous chiefs, when life was precarious and property unimportant, may have dealt principally with wrongs to person, yet the main care of advancing civilization has been for property. After all, life is a very primitive thing. Nearly all that makes it more significant to us than to the beast is associated with our possessions — with property, all the way from the food we share with the beasts, to the most refined products of the human imagination. To the civilized man *the rights of property are more important than the right to life.*

In our private dealings with men, we may, if we choose, ignore these claims of civilization with no harm resulting to society; but it is different when we undertake to lay down general rules of practice. In allowing our emotions and our sense of abstract right to oversway us in our attitude towards politics and government, we forget that it is not ours to determine the fundamental relation of things, or to define justice, but to make rules of action in accordance with the decrees, immutable so far as we can see, of a superior power. We are, essentially, not legislators but judges.

And what then, you ask, of human laws? In sober sooth it is not we who create laws; we are rather finders and interpreters of laws registered in a court beyond our control, and our decrees are merely the application of our knowledge, or ignorance, of the law to particular conditions. When our decrees are counter to the law of fact, they become at best dead letters, and at worst, agents of trouble and destruction. The office of the legislator in general is not unlike that of the jurisconsults of the Roman Empire, upon whom was bestowed the right of giving binding responses to a judge when he was not clear in a question of equity or interpretation, and who thus helped to mould the law into the form in which it was finally codified and handed down to the modern world. And in a more special sense, the spirit that guided the trend of their opinions is worthy of scrutiny to-day, as its influence is still vastly stronger than is commonly understood. The expansion of Roman affairs had already begun to force the courts to substitute in general practice the *jus gentium*, or principles of law which seemed to be in effect among all peoples, for the old *jus civile*, or custom which prevailed among Roman citizens when these were a small and comparatively homogeneous body. The responses of the jurisconsults inevitably followed and emphasized this tendency, and, under the influence of late Greek philosophy, went even

further in generalization. On the conception of a *jus gentium* these Stoic legalists superimposed the conception of a *jus naturale*, or law implanted by Nature in the heart of man, to which custom and statute should, so far as possible, be made to conform. It is not too much to say that this is one of the profoundest conceptions of the human mind; but it was as dangerous as it was profound. It brought into legislation the idea conveyed by the word *nature*, which is, perhaps, the most treacherous that ever slipped from the tongue of man. The ambiguity came from the philosophers themselves, especially from the Stoics, who used the word at one time to signify the forces and material of the world as they actually are, and at another time to signify the world as it ought to be. There might be no great harm in this ambiguity, were it not for the resulting confusion in ideas and practice. When we repeat the Stoic command to *Follow nature*, we really mean, as the Stoic meant, to follow our ideal of nature. We do not mean that a man should imitate the conduct of a tiger, which is yet entirely natural, nor of men as we see them daily acting, but that he should imitate his ideal of what a man should be. The command is unmeaning enough, and has force only because it seems to render the ideal concrete by confounding it with the actual. And there is its peril. We are prone to laziness and self-flattery, and so we are constantly justifying

ourselves in imitating the baser actions of men, under cover of the command to follow human nature. Is not nature what all men are doing? It would, in fact, be easy to show that in the sphere of private morals this command has resulted in a curious mixture of good and evil, by clothing custom in the garb of the ideal.

But the peril for law, as law is what we propose for other men in the mass rather than for ourselves, is of the contrary sort. Law is not a code of ideal virtues nor a guide to individual perfection, but a rule for regulating the relations of society for practical purposes. Just so soon as, in any large measure, it fails to recognize the actuality of human nature, or pronounces in conformity with an ideal of human nature, it becomes inoperative or mischievous. If law supposed that all men were honest, what would be the consequence? Or, if law demanded that all men should be kind-hearted, what would be the consequence? These are absurd extremes, but an error of really the same character has obtained a kind of philosophical excuse through the treachery of such a phrase as *jus naturale*. The experience and hard-headedness of the earlier jurisconsults saved the Roman law from falling a prey to an undue idealism, although it is a fact that in Byzantine times there was introduced a certain degree of humanitarianism corresponding with the decay of civilization.

But for reasons which lie deeply imbedded in the sources of our modern life, we are in great and continual peril of a humanitarianism springing from a mistaken conception of the *jus naturale*. The whole impetus of Rousseau's revolutionary philosophy is really derived from his reassumption and eloquent expansion of that conception. We are bound, in any clear-sighted view of the larger exigencies of the relations of man with man, to fortify ourselves against such a perversion of the institutions of government as would adapt them to the nature of man as he ought to be, instead of the nature of man as he actually is, and would relax the rigour of law, in pity for the degree of injustice inherent in earthly life. If our laws, as we call them, being indeed but attempts to copy a code we have not made and cannot repeal, are to work for progress rather than for retrogression, they must recognize property as the basis of civilization, and must admit the consequent inequality of conditions among men. They will have little or no regard for labour in itself or for the labourer in himself, but they will provide rigidly that labour shall receive the recompense it has bargained for, and that the labourer, as every other man, shall be secure in the possession of what he has received. We may try to teach him to produce more and to bargain better, but in face of all appeals of sentiment and all reasonings of abstract justice, society must

learn again to-day that it cannot legislate contrary to the decrees of Fate. In this way, looking at the larger good of society, we may say that the dollar is more than the man, and that *the rights of property are more important than the right to life.*

So directly is the maintenance of civilization and peace and all our welfare dependent on this truth, that it is safer, in the utterance of law, to err on the side of natural inequality than on the side of ideal justice. We can go a little way, very slowly, in the endeavour to equalize conditions by the regulation of property, but the elements of danger are always near at hand and insidious; and undoubtedly any legislation which deliberately releases labour from the obligations of contract, and permits it to make war on property with impunity, must be regarded as running counter to the first demands of society. It is an ugly fact, as the world has always seen, that, under cover of the natural inequality of property, evil and greedy men will act in a way that can only be characterized as legal robbery. It is strictly within the province of the State to prevent such action so far as it safely can. Yet even here, in view of the magnitude of the interests involved, *it is better that legal robbery should exist along with the maintenance of law, than that legal robbery should be suppressed at the expense of law.*

No doubt there is a certain cruelty in such a principle, as there is a factor of cruelty in life itself. But it does not, in any proper sense of the word, involve the so-called economic interpretation of history. On the contrary, this principle recognizes, far more completely than does any humanitarian creed, that there is a large portion of human activity lying quite outside of the domain of physical constraint and legislation, and it is supremely jealous that the arms of government should not extend beyond their true province. All our religious feelings, our aspiring hopes, our personal morality, our conscience, our intellectual pursuits, all these things, and all they mean, lie beyond the law — all our individual life, as distinguished from the material relations of man with man, reaches far beyond the law's proper comprehension.

Our most precious heritage of liberty depends on the safeguarding of that realm of the individual against the encroachments of a legal equalitarianism. For there is nothing surer than that liberty of the spirit, if I may use that dubious word, is bound up with the inequality of men in their natural relations; and every movement in history to deny the inequalities of nature has been attended, and by a fatal necessity always will be attended, with an effort to crush the liberty of distinction in the ideal sphere.

As the rights of property do not involve the

economic interpretation of history, so neither do they result in materialism. The very contrary. For in this matter, as in all other questions of human conduct and natural forces, you may to a certain degree control a fact, but if you deny a fact it will control you. This is the plain paradox of life, and its application is everywhere. Just so sure as you see a feministic movement undertaking to deny the peculiar characteristics and limitations of the female sex, you will see this sex element overriding all bounds — you will, to take an obvious illustration, see women dressing in a manner to exaggerate their relative physical disability and their appeal to the other sex. I do not say that the feministic denial of facts is the only cause that may bring about this exaggeration; but it is indisputably one such cause. So, in a more general way, the denial of the body, or the romantic idealization of love, will end by producing a state of morbid eroticism, as history abundantly testifies. And, in another direction, the encouraging of a false sentimentality in the idea of marriage, and the slurring over of its importance as a social institution and as the basis of the family, is one of the sure ways of degrading that natural relation into something we do not like to consider.

Again, if you hear a man talking overmuch of brotherly love and that sort of thing — I do not mean the hypocrite, but the sincere humanita-

rian whom you and I have met and had dealings with and could name — if you hear such a man talking overmuch of serving his fellows, you are pretty sure that here is a man who will be slippery or dishonourable in his personal transactions. I do not say that there are no exceptions; but the "reformer" is a type well known. And societies are much like individual men. As soon as a nation begins to deny officially the inherent combativeness of human nature, it is in a fair way to be hurried into war. We have seen a group of obstinate humanitarians in Washington, by denying the facts of the Mexican situation, drag this country at Vera Cruz into the hypocritical but fortunately short-lived pretence of waging a "war for service." What is the cause of the evils, physical and moral, that have perplexed our Southern States since the era of Reconstruction? Certainly in large measure the humanitarian ideas of justice and equality which were in flagrant disregard of the facts of a particular stage of civilization, and made a cover for every kind of rascality and stupidity. We are seeing something of the same sort beginning to happen in Turkey and Persia and China, and are like to see it in many other places. Again, of course, I do not say that humanitarian denial of the facts is the only cause of war and national dissolution — would to heaven it were! — but it is just as certainly one such cause, or contributing cause, as

it is certain that we shall hurt our fingers if we grasp a burning coal under the notion that it is not hot.[1]

And the same paradox holds true of property. You may to a certain extent control it and make it subservient to the ideal nature of man; but the moment you deny its rights, or undertake to legislate in defiance of them, you may for a time unsettle the very foundations of society, you will certainly in the end render property your despot instead of your servant, and so produce a materialized and debased civilization. Let me illustrate what I mean by a single example of the practical working of humanitarianism. I quote from a striking article on *The Law's Delays*, by Professor Tyrrell Williams:

> The apotheosis of debtors in America began about a hundred years ago, and has continued to the present time. In its origin the movement was humanitarian and praiseworthy. Imprisonment for debt was a reality in those days. But has not the movement gone too far, and become ridiculous? The traditional debtor is a hard-working farmer or mechanic struggling to keep the wolf from the door. Is that a true picture of the twentieth-century debtor, who glories in delay of justice? Most certainly not. The typical debtor of the twentieth century is a corporation organized along the lines that were so popular in New Jersey before Woodrow Wilson was

[1] Again, I must call attention to the fact that most of this book was written before the present war. These illustrations sound strangely antiquated to-day; but the principle involved has not been altered.

elected Governor. The transportation and other public-service corporations are the champion debtors of America. They have been very clever. They have capitalized the ordinary American's sentimental affection for debtors. These corporate debtors are the chief beneficiaries of delay of justice in America, and they know it. That is why directly and indirectly they oppose all serious efforts to reform judicial procedure, and why they employ attorneys who are experts at "filling the record full of error."

This is but a single instance of a false sentiment opening the door to the prowling thieves of the highway. More generally, it is in accordance with the law of human nature that the sure way to foster the spirit of materialism is to unsettle the material basis of social life. Manifestly, the mind will be free to enlarge itself in immaterial interests only when that material basis is secure, and without a certain degree of such security a man must be anxious over material things and preponderantly concerned with them. And, manifestly, if this security is dependent on the rights of property, and these rights are denied or belittled in the name of some impossible ideal, it follows that the demands of intellectual leisure will be regarded as abnormal and anti-social, and that he who turns to the still and quiet life will be despised as a drone, if not hated as an enemy of the serious part of the community. There is something at once comical and vicious in the spectacle of those men of property

who take advantage of their leisure to dream out vast benevolent schemes which would render their own self-satisfied career impossible.

No doubt the ideal society would be that in which every man should be filled with noble aspirations, and should have the opportunity to pursue them. But I am not here concerned with such Utopian visions, nor, as I have said, am I arguing with those who are honestly persuaded that a socialistic régime is, in our day, or any day, economically or psychologically feasible. My desire is rather to confirm in the dictates of their own reason those who believe that the private ownership of property, including its production and distribution, is, with very limited reservations, essential to the material stability and progress of society. We who have this conviction need very much to-day to strengthen ourselves against the insidious charms of a misapplied idealism; we need to remind ourselves that laws which would render capital insecure and, by a heavy income tax or other discrimination in favour of labour, would deprive property of its power of easy self-perpetuation, though they speak loudly in the name of humanity, will in the end be subversive of those conditions under which alone any true value of human life can be realized.

This, I take it, is the reason that the Church and the University as institutions have almost invariably stood as strongly reactionary against

any innovations which threaten the intrenched rights of property. It is not at bottom the greed of possession that moves them — though this motive also may have entered into the attitude of their governors, as into all the theories and practices of men — nor are we justified in casting into their teeth the reproach that they who profess to stand for spiritual things are in their corporate capacity the most tenacious upholders of worldly privilege. They are guided by an instinctive feeling that in this mixed and mortal state of our existence, the safety and usefulness of the institutions they control are finally bound up with the inviolability of property which has been devoted to unworldly pursuits, and removed from the control of popular passions and hasty legislation. They are the jealous guardians of that respite from material labour which they hold in fee for those who are by character destined more specifically to be the creators and transmitters of the world's intellectual and spiritual heritage. Nor does the need of privilege end with institutions. One shudders to think of the bleak pall of anxiety and the rage of internecine materialism that would fall upon society were the laws so altered as to transfer the predominant rights from property acquired to the labour by which it is produced. For *if property is secure, it may be the means to an end, whereas if it is insecure it will be the end itself.*

DISRAELI AND CONSERVATISM

DISRAELI AND CONSERVATISM

SOMEWHERE in the course of his infinite gossip Augustus J. C. Hare tells of a dinner at which one of the guests spoke of Disraeli as "that old Jew gentleman who is sitting on the top of chaos." The phrase, worthy of the master of epigram it describes, has been much in my mind as I have been reading the extended memoirs begun by Mr. Monypenny and now in the hands of Mr. G. E. Buckle. The third volume of the biography ends with the year 1855, when Disraeli was neither old, nor yet quite at the summit of the chaos he was climbing; but the significant philosophy of the man is here, and the first flush of victory. The rest can be only the putting on of the crown and the putting of it off — a little tarnished. His statesmanship reaches its climax with the formation of the Conservative party; after that his career is politics.

The very entrance of Disraeli upon the stage is of a kind to stir the imagination. He was born at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when a Hebrew was still precluded from the national life, and, although for social reasons mainly, he was baptized at the age of twelve and through life professed an ardent attachment to the Angli-

can Church, he never denied his race, but rather gloried in it and held it up always as the chosen vessel of God. His education was irregular, at a time when the hard discipline of the public schools was regarded as the only training for victory on the hustings as well as on the fields of Waterloo. He was bizarre in his manners and dress to the point of absurdity, startling London with his curls and waistcoats long before he conquered it by his brains. What should England expect of a candidate for Parliament who, in the days of the Reform Bill, could appear at a dinner wearing "a black velvet coat lined with satin, purple trousers with a gold band running down the outside seam, a scarlet waistcoat, long lace ruffles, falling down to the tips of his fingers, white gloves with several brilliant rings outside them, and long black ringlets rippling down upon his shoulders." Sometimes his trousers were green, and heaven knows what other colours, and this at a time when Bulwer's *Pelham* was introducing the fashion of black as the distinguishing mark of a gentleman. Mayfair gazed and wondered; but Mayfair did not laugh, at least to his face, for it knew his power of sarcasm, as Parliament was afterwards to know it. "He was once dining," says the same lady who has described his raiment, "with my insufferable brother-in-law, Mr. Norton, when the host begged him to drink a particular kind of wine, saying he had

never tasted anything so good before. Disraeli agreed that the wine was very good. 'Well,' said Norton, 'I have got wine twenty times as good in my cellar.' 'No doubt, no doubt,' said Disraeli, looking round the table; 'but, my dear fellow, this is quite good enough for such *canaille* as you have got to-day.'"

There was, in fact, method in Disraeli's vanity, a deliberate purpose to conquer, by dazzling and bullying, a place to which the ordinary paths of access were for him closely barred. I do not know that he was a special reader of Plutarch, but the precision and tenacity of his ambition resemble nothing so much in modern history as they do those stories from the antique world. Early in his life the two prizes of literature and politics rose before his vision, and, though he never gave up the former, he deliberately chose a practical career for his serious concern and made letters subordinate to it. "Poetry," he notes in his Diary, "is the safety-valve of my passions, but I wish to act what I write." Having thus chosen, he determined in his mind the manner of procedure and the warrant of success. "Destiny is our will, and our will is our nature," is the reflection of his Contarini amid the ruins of Athens. The same hero, speaking for Disraeli at the age of twenty-eight, is inspired by these talismanic rules copied from an obelisk in Thebes: "Be patient: cherish hope. Read more: ponder

less. Nature is more powerful than education: time will develop everything." There was never a more patient politician than Disraeli; never one who found destiny more clearly in his own will. And if confidence in himself was one side of his shield, the other side was contempt, or something like it, for mankind in general. Writing to his father from Malta, in 1830, he relates this incident:

> Here the younkers do nothing but play rackets, billiards, and cards, race and smoke. To govern men, you must either excel them in their accomplishments, or despise them. Clay does one, I do the other, and we are both equally popular. Affectation tells here even better than wit. Yesterday, at the racket court, sitting in the gallery among strangers, the ball entered, and lightly struck me and fell at my feet. I picked it up, and observing a young rifleman excessively stiff, I humbly requested him to forward its passage into the court, as I really had never thrown a ball in my life. This incident has been the general subject of conversation at all the messes to-day!

That in another person might seem like impudent coxcombry; but there is something almost terrible in the thought of a young adventurer of twenty-five calmly adopting such a policy of dealing with men, and by it raising himself to be, as he was for a time, the most powerful leader in the world. Nor was the goal he set before himself any less definite than the means of advance. In 1834, Lord Melbourne, then still Home Secretary in

the Reform Cabinet, and Disraeli, a beaten candidate for Parliament, were talking together after dinner, and the typical British Peer, the friend of Victoria, was attracted by the cleverness of the Hebrew aspirant. "Lord Melbourne," as Disraeli tells the story, which is confirmed by Melbourne's biographer, "asked how he could advance me in life, and half proposed that I should be his private secretary, enquiring what my object in life might be. 'To be Prime Minister.'" The condescending Whig tried gently to argue the young man out of what must have seemed to him pure infatuation; but he did not forget the remark. When, in 1848, as an old man he learned of Disraeli's success in Parliament, he was heard to exclaim: "By God! the fellow will do it yet."

Certainly he needed patience as well as determination at the outset of his career. Three times he stood for Parliament as an independent, without money and without energetic backing. Inevitably he was beaten. Then, in 1835, came the famous Tamworth Manifesto of Peel, with its programme for reconstructing the old Tory party to meet the exigencies of modern politics. Its platform could not long satisfy any one who looked below the surface of things, and ten years later Disraeli described it scornfully as "an attempt to carry on affairs by substituting the fulfilment of the duties of office for the performance of the functions of government; and to maintain

this negative system by the influence of property, reputable private conduct, and what are called good connections." But at the time it gave the baffled candidate an excuse for affiliating himself avowedly with one of the ruling parties. Almost immediately he had himself nominated to the Carlton Club, which was "the recognized social citadel of Toryism." He was yet to fail once again, but to fail in such a way that he could answer a scurrilous attack of O'Connell's with the challenge: "I have a deep conviction that the hour is at hand. . . . We shall meet at Philippi." His readiness to resort to the duel with his Irish antagonist's son did him no harm in the eyes of his British electorate, and his eccentricities had begun to impose themselves on his audiences as a mark of power.

Two years later, in the first Parliament of Queen Victoria, he was returned for Maidstone, and with him went the Mr. Wyndham Lewis whose widow was to become his wife, aiding him with her money and her loyal sympathy. His marriage, if we may look forward a little, was not lacking in those elements that furnish the world with comedy, but was heroic also and beautiful. It is a fact that one night when they were driving together to Parliament House she sat all the way with her finger jammed in the door, bearing the torture in silence rather than disturb his mind before an anxious debate. And it is said by Froude

that the only instance in which he ever spoke with genuine anger was once when some young men ventured a jest at Mrs. Disraeli's age and his motives for marriage. "Gentlemen," he replied, as he rose and left the room, "do none of you know what gratitude means?" The world called her frivolous and him mercenary.

Henceforth Disraeli's business life passed with politicians; his recreation was in the library and in the fields and groves of Hughenden, dreaming his dreams and playing the country gentleman in the neighbourhood of the Beaconsfield which had been immortalized by Burke, and whose name, which should have been Burke's, he was to assume when raised to the peerage. And, knowing the vanities and egotism of the man, we like to remember that he refused the pomp of burial in the Abbey, but chose rather to lie beside his wife and another faithful friend in a quiet parish churchyard.

Such a career would be memorable were it only for the interest excited by the story of a great ambition working itself out through enormous difficulties and in original ways, but it has this added significance that it is bound up with the rise of a new political philosophy, or rather with the resuscitation and adaptation of an old philosophy to meet new circumstances. The result of the Revolution of 1688 had been to introduce into politics a kind of drifting utili-

tarianism and to establish in power an oligarchy which, under various forms and party titles, had ruled in England for a century and a half. Virtually these men were Whigs, and their long close reign was, as Disraeli used to say, somewhat fantastically perhaps, nothing more than the realization of the frustrated efforts of Hampden and the other early leaders of the Rebellion "to establish in England a high aristocratic republic on the model of the Venetian, then the study and admiration of all speculative politicians." It held together, despite factional divisions, through the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars, owing to the pressure of events and the principles instilled into public life by Burke. But by 1832 such an oligarchy had become anomalous. In the Reform Bill its leaders, with virtuous faces, abdicated, leaving the country with no clear principle or order of government beyond a short-sighted opportunism. Under the Primacy of Melbourne (1835–1841) there was the shadow of Whiggery over the land, but not the power: Parliament was marking time. Then came with Peel the restoration and betrayal of the Tories. Meanwhile, under the stress of famine in Ireland and labour revolt in England, the new liberal and the new conservative ideas were becoming conscious aims of government. Disraeli, as we have seen, entered Parliament as a supporter of Peel, but he soon felt the deep cleft between his own

philosophic conservatism and the Tory opportunism of his chief. Various acts of Peel made him appear to Disraeli, and not to Disraeli alone, a defaulter from the interests he was supposed to be protecting, and when, stealing his policy from the discomfited Whigs, he proposed the repeal of the Corn Laws, the antagonism between the two men broke out in war to the death. The Repeal was carried in the House of Commons the 15th May, 1846, but only by splitting the party into the personal followers of Peel, who for a number of years held together as a separate body, and the fragment of Tories who clung loyally to the landed interests and obstinately to a protective tariff. A month later Peel suffered defeat in a division on the Coercion Bill designed for the temporary and forced pacification of Ireland. Four days after that he resigned.

In this struggle the recognized leader of the outraged Tories was Lord George Bentinck, the son of the Duke of Portland, who gave up the sports and pursuits dear to his heart for the unfamiliar strain of political contention. Without him the party could scarcely have held together against the drawing power of Peel, and Disraeli in his life of Bentinck has left a generous tribute to his character and influence. But for us to-day the zest of the drama lies in the personal duel between Disraeli and Peel. Not often does the record of such a war of words retain its vitality

for the reader of a later generation; Parliamentary wit has a sad way of growing stale, and the flashes of lightning that dazzled when they fell have a way of looking like paltry fireworks after the lapse of years. But it is not so with the cold malignant strokes of Disraeli; they pierce and sting to-day as they did when Peel, sitting below on the Treasury bench, was their suffering target. Some of his epigrams pronounced at this time have become proverbial: "The right hon. gentleman caught the Whigs bathing and walked away with their clothes," for instance, and, "A Conservative Government is an organized hypocrisy." And when Peel, after his Cabinet had resigned because they could not agree on the Repeal, and had taken office again because the Whigs were too distracted to carry out the policy stolen from them, came before a breathlessly expectant Parliament with no clear statement of his purpose, but with a long rambling discourse on things in general, Disraeli's reply fell with a power of terrible sarcasm that reminds one at times of Achilles shouting over the trenches in the plain of Troy. It is no wonder that Peel was unable to look indifferent or to conceal his "nervous twitchings," amid "the delirious laughter with which the House accepted and sealed the truth of the attacks." An eyewitness of those scenes has left this account of Disraeli's manner:

In conveying an innuendo, an ironical sneer, or a suggestion of contempt, which courtesy forbids him to translate into words — in conveying such masked enmities by means of a glance, a shrug, an altered tone of voice, or a transient expression of face, he is unrivalled. Not only is the shaft envenomed, but it is aimed with deadly precision by a cool hand and a keen eye, with a courage fearless of retaliation. He will convulse the House by the action that helps his words, yet leave nothing for his victims to take hold of. He is a most dangerous antagonist in this respect, because so intangible. And all the while you are startled by his extreme coolness and impassibility. . . . You might suppose him wholly unconscious of the effect he is producing; for he never seems to laugh or to chuckle, however slightly, at his own hits. While all around him are convulsed with merriment or excitement at some of his finely-wrought sarcasms, he holds himself, seemingly, in total suspension, as though he had no existence for the ordinary feelings and passions of humanity; and the moment the shouts and confusion have subsided, the same calm, low, monotonous, but yet distinct and searching voice, is heard still pouring forth his ideas, while he is preparing to launch another sarcasm, hissing hot, into the soul of his victim.

With the return of the Whigs to power under Lord John Russell and the isolated position of the Peelites, the leaders of the Tories had before them the great task of remaking their party. They pulled themselves together sufficiently to form a brief and troubled ministry in 1852, with Derby as First Lord of the Treasury and Disraeli as Chancellor of the Exchequer and Leader of the

Commons, and again in 1858 and 1866. Before the close of this third administration the Earl of Derby retired, leaving Disraeli as Prime Minister; but the full triumph of Disraeli came in the period from 1874 to 1880, when he was at the head of his own Government, for the last four years as the Earl of Beaconsfield. From him the party passed into the hands of Salisbury. It is worthy of notice, by the way, that Salisbury's son, Lord Hugh Cecil, has recently published a little book on *Conservatism* which is a notable addition to the literature of the subject.

If Disraeli's personal contest with Peel is the dramatic moment of his career, its larger significance lies in the patient effort to infuse a living philosophy into the dumb unthinking Toryism of tradition, and to put meaning into the name Conservative which the party had assumed in 1835. The Reform Act, while relaxing the grip of the Whig oligarchy, had left the principle of utilitarianism in full operation, and from it was growing the doctrine of *laissez-faire* along with the so-called economic interpretation of history. Under the driving force of Cobden and Bright and the Anti-Corn-Law League power had passed from the landed proprietors to the manufacturers and the middle classes. Protection was withdrawn from the land, while the taxes for the poor and other burdens laid on it by virtue of its privileges remained in force. But the new Liberal

party could not rest here. Already the pressure on it from the more radical organizations was growing severe, and socialism was before it. The conservative elements in its creed had no other tenure than the routine of habit. What was to withstand the onflow? Nothing, unless a true conservatism, based on some permanent principles of human nature, could be reasoned out and brought into play; and this task Disraeli set before himself as a conscious aim. He prevailed, or partly prevailed, chiefly, I fear, because his theories coincided with the personal advantages of a group of men who, without his brains, would have been helpless. His failure, so far as he failed, was due in part to the instinctive dislike of the practical British mind for anything tainted with ideas; in part also to weaknesses in his own character.

His conservative philosophy, as yet fairly free of the later mixture of imperialism, may be found full-fledged in the articles he contributed to the press before his election to Parliament and in the novels written during the Peel administration. Of the latter it is not my purpose to offer here any criticism. They were recognized at the time by a French critic as creating a special branch of historical fiction, and to create a new *genre* in literature is no slight honour. It is fair to say also that, with all their manifest blemishes of taste, they are likely to interest the reader just

in proportion to his experience of life and his acquaintance with English politics. John Morley, no lover of Disraeli surely, sums up the traits of the novels in a few phrases — "the spirit of whim in them, the ironic solemnity, the historical paradoxes, the fantastic glitter of dubious gems, the grace of high comedy, all in union with a social vision that often pierced deep below the surface." Mr. Morley is not surprised that Gladstone did not relish these qualities.

The most important of Disraeli's early fugitive writings are the *Vindication of the English Constitution* (a "letter" to Lord Lyndhurst, published in 1835) and the *Letters of Runnymede* (contributed to the *Times* during the first half of 1836). They are an attempt to appear in the double rôle of Burke and Junius, and Disraeli, who was neither quite one nor quite the other of those heroic figures, comes, it must be allowed, amazingly near being a blend of both. Runnymede has not the terrible voice of the gods, and his attack on Lord John Russell, though as venomous in intention as Burke's on the Duke of Bedford and Junius's on the preceding duke (the Russells enjoy an inherited privilege of abuse), has neither the justification nor the deadly efficacy of its models. Yet Runnymede could sting:

> You were born with a strong ambition and a feeble intellect. It is an union not uncommon, and in the majority of cases only tends to convert an aspiring youth

into a querulous and discontented manhood. But under some circumstances — when combined, for instance, with great station, and consequent opportunities of action — it is an union which often leads to the development of a peculiar talent — the talent of political mischief. . . .

Disraeli knew that the men on whom he was pouring his scurrilous, and anonymous, invective were not the empty knaves he made them; but political mischief is not always the work of rogues or fools, and Disraeli believed with all his heart — and rightly, whether the result meant good or evil — that a revolution was under way and that the spirit of the new Whiggism was "hostile to the English Constitution." That must be the palliation of his rancour; that is the explanation also of his endeavour to fortify his own party with a tenable theory of government based on the Constitutional balance of powers.

The conservatism which Disraeli preached in season and out of season, to mocking Whigs and stolid Tories, rests on a few simple facts of human nature. It believes first of all in the virtue of memory as equally important with the spontaneous faculty of invention. It lays stress on the sheer value of the past — what Disraeli, quoting a fine phrase of Lord Coke's, called "reverend antiquity" — as a constituent part of the present; it emphasizes the need of experience as a brake on the forward-driving unrest of hope.

Both liberal and conservative admit that change is an inevitable attendant of life; the difference in their attitude is this, that the liberal tends to regard all change as progress towards something better, whereas the conservative tends to regard change in itself as a discomfort, to be tolerated only when it removes a specific evil.

Nor does the virtue of this slackening process depend alone on the need of delay to ensure a wise choice among the thronging desires of change; it depends also on the necessity of making sure that the admitted change, when it comes, shall be salutary in its operation rather than subversive of order. For an illustration, take the growing power of the labour unions. Their constitution was at the beginning bitterly contested by men who now, in theory at least, acknowledge the validity of their principles. And, however it may seem wise that this hostility should have given way in time, it does not follow that the initial check was unsalutary, nor is the surrender an argument of inconsistency. For it should be pretty clear to any one who reads history that a new power of this sort, if it were exercised without opposition by men with no discipline of experience, would have been subject to frightful abuses. The injustice and impracticability of many of the schemes of the unions today, after years of training, show what labour might have done to hamper prosperity and retard

progress had it been allowed to organize freely under the first wild compunctions of injustice.

In this way conservatism is an essential element of sound evolution, and Disraeli was not without warrant in claiming the name of Progressive for his own party against its exclusive appropriation by the Liberals. As a matter of fact all liberals, except those of the most radical dye, are ready to admit the necessity of conservatism as a wholesome brake on the wheels of change; but they are wont to look with something of contempt on a party whose function is of a purely negative sort. Disraeli had raised a laugh at Peel for stealing the clothes of the Liberals while they were in bathing, yet he himself did not hesitate on occasion to profit by the same kind of transaction, notably when he "dished the Whigs" by the Franchise Act of 1867 — an act which to the smitten Tories was "a political betrayal" without parallel, but for which Disraeli declared that he had been educating his party for years. It would, indeed, not be easy to deny the liberals their indulgence of superiority if conservatism had no other office than to eliminate the false starts and oppose a wholesome retardation to the wiser innovations of the really constructive element of government.

But to Disraeli, as to his predecessors, the Conservative party had its own programme of construction. As a negative force conservatism

is based on a certain distrust of human nature, believing that the immediate impulses of the heart and visions of the brain are likely to be misleading guides; whereas the liberalism which ran through the eighteenth century by the side of Whiggery, and finally absorbed it, being of the same parentage as the religion of Deism and the philosophy of "Enlightenment," rests on the assumption that, practically speaking, all men are by nature good and need only to be let alone to develop in the right direction. But this distrust of human nature is closely connected with another and more positive factor of conservatism — its trust in the controlling power of the imagination. These, as I analyse the matter, — the instinctive distrust of uncontrolled human nature and the instinctive reliance on the imagination, — are the very roots of the conservative temper, as their contraries are the roots of the liberal and radical temper, the lack of imagination, if any distinction is to be made, being the chief factor of liberalism and confidence in human nature being the main impulse of radicalism.

Certainly both of these conservative principles lay deeply imbedded in Disraeli's mind beneath his feeling that

> Perilous is sweeping change, all chance unsound.

An instance of his distrust of the common intelligence of his fellows, running even into super-

cilious contempt, has already been given, and indeed too much stress, if anything, is ordinarily placed on what is called his cynicism. But it is not so often remembered that his reliance on the imagination was a companion of that distrust, and equally strong. And here, in Disraeli's opposition to the current of the age, we shall be brought face to face with some curious paradoxes. It should seem that a party whose theories are based on confidence in untrammelled human nature ought to present the aims and destiny of mankind in a fairer light than its adversary; yet the very contrary is the fact. It is no matter of chance that utilitarianism and liberalism and Manchester economics were coincident with the rise of a materialistic and pseudo-scientific philosophy; they are, in fact, branches from the same root. And against the most fundamental of these, the pseudo-science of the day, with its desolating notion of progress, Disraeli set himself with all the strength of his disposition. "Modern philosophy," he wrote, years before the advent of Darwinism, "with its superficial discoveries, has infused into the breast of man a spirit of scepticism; but I think that, ere long, science will again become imaginative, and that as we become more profound, we may become also more credulous." Again, still before Darwin's work, there is in his *Tancred* a delightful bit of satire of Chambers's *Vestiges of Creation*, which he dubs the *Revelations of Chaos:*

"It explains everything!" said Tancred; "it must, indeed, be a very remarkable book!"

"I think it will just suit you," said Lady Constance. "Do you know, I thought so several times while I was reading it."

"To judge from the title, the subject is rather obscure," said Tancred.

"No longer so," said Lady Constance. "It is treated scientifically; everything is explained by geology and astronomy, and in that way. It shows you exactly how a star is formed; nothing can be so pretty! A cluster of vapour, the cream of the milky way, a sort of celestial cheese, churned into light. You must read it, 't is charming."

"Nobody ever saw a star formed," said Tancred.

"Perhaps not. You must read *Revelations;* it is all explained. But what is most interesting, is the way in which man has been developed. You know, all is development. The principle is perpetually going on. First there was nothing, then there was something; then, I forget the next, I think there were shells, then fishes; then we came: let me see, did we come next? Never mind that; we came at last. And the next change there will be something very superior to us, something with wings. Ah! that's it: we were fishes, and I believe we shall be crows. But you must read it."

"I do not believe I ever was a fish," said Tancred.

"Oh! but it is all proved." . . .

"I was a fish, and I shall be a crow," said Tancred to himself, when the hall door closed on him. "What a spiritual mistress!"

More memorable than this *jeu d'esprit* was his epigrammatic conclusion to a speech at Oxford in 1864, in the full swing of the new Darwinistic

materialism: "I, my Lord, am on the side of the angels." You may take these things as excellent fooling; they are that, and they are something more than that. They are not an attack on science, properly so called; they are not, after the manner of Gladstone, an attempt to effect a reconciliation between science and religion by distorting both; they are a warning to science to keep within her own field, and any one who is watching the currents of thought to-day knows that the warning has begun to find heedful ears.

And Disraeli's political convictions ran parallel with his religious faith. As early as 1833 he wrote in his diary: "The Utilitarians in politics are like the Unitarians in religion; both omit imagination in their systems, and imagination governs mankind." Hence his kindred distaste for the Manchester School, because their trust in human nature as a purely economic machine was combined with a blindness to the finer feelings and all those less ponderable forces which we sum up under the name of spiritual. His charge was that these economists "counselled the people of England to lower their tone"; and he was right. It should never be forgotten that while Disraeli, the avowed champion of the soil, was yet, in his *Sybil* and in his speeches, setting forth the unspeakable condition of the miners and factory workers and educating his party for just labour

legislation, the virtuous John Bright, who believed that the control of government should be transferred from the despots of the land to the manufacturing classes, was nevertheless opposing laws for the regulation of the hours of work and for protection of children, or for the sheathing of machinery which had a habit of grinding up the workers. History pronounces the philosophy of Manchester one of the most heartless creations of the human brain. And Peel was the tool of Bright and Cobden. These things must be remembered when we hear Disraeli calling himself a *Radical*-Tory, and appealing to the people of England.

It is not strange, therefore, that when Disraeli, in his *Lord George Bentinck*, came to sum up the character of Peel, he should have laid his finger on this defect of imagination as the cause of that statesman's weakness and final failure. No writer on Disraeli can afford to pass by this superbly discriminating sketch:

> Nature had combined in Sir Robert Peel many admirable parts. . . . Such a man, under any circumstances and in any sphere of life, would probably have become remarkable. Ordained from his youth to be busied with the affairs of a great empire, such a man, after long years of observation, practice, and perpetual discipline, would have become what Sir Robert Peel was in the later portion of his life, a transcendent administrator of public business and a matchless master of debate in a popular assembly. . . .

Thus gifted and thus accomplished, Sir Robert Peel had a great deficiency: *he was without imagination.* . . .

Sir Robert Peel had a peculiarity which is perhaps natural with men of very great talents who have not the creative faculty; he had a dangerous sympathy with the creations of others. Instead of being cold and wary, as he was commonly supposed, he was impulsive and even inclined to rashness. . . . He was ever on the lookout for new ideas, and when he embraced them he did so with eagerness and often with precipitancy; he always carried these novel plans to an extent which even their projectors or chief promoters had usually not anticipated. . . .

The Roman Catholic Association, the Birmingham Union, the Manchester League, were all the legitimate offspring of Sir Robert Peel. No minister ever diminished the power of government in this country so much as this eminent man. No one ever strained the Constitution so much. He was the unconscious parent of political agitation: he literally forced the people out of doors to become statesmen, and the whole tendency of his policy was to render our institutions mere forms. In a word, no one, with all his conservative language, more advanced revolution.

The strength and weakness of the British liberal were never more consummately depicted; change the name, and you have Gladstone to the life. The immediate offspring of the "Spirit of Whiggism" was the "union of oligarchical wealth and mob poverty," to use Disraeli's words; its living grandchild is a radicalism of a different voice, though the youngster's actions have not been altogether unlike those of its parent.

Perhaps the purest example of the conservative distrust of human nature combined with trust in the imagination is the famous myth of Plato's *Republic*, by which the people are to be cajoled into believing in a caste of birth and so persuaded to perform contentedly each his own function in the hierarchy of society. That naked illusion of government, as it may be called, has haunted many minds since Plato's day, and sometimes in cruder forms. It may seem, to some it does seem, cynically low, but apparently it is the underlying fact of things: you will find it hard to escape, unless you care to rest order on the more brutal fact of the policeman's club — whose power after all depends on an illusion, in the end. For there is a true illusion, if the phrase will be accepted, whereby the lower nature of man is charmed by the voice of his higher instincts; and there is a false illusion, of the very contrary sort. The one is social and constructive, and is the work, properly speaking, of the imagination; the other is disintegrating and destructive, and is the product of the egotistic desires.

The great instance in government of this higher illusion working itself out in practical forms is the Roman Constitution, with its balances and checks, and its concealment of the harsh idea of caste in the refinements of institutions.

As for the Roman Constitution, it had three elements, each of them possessing sovereign powers; and

their respective share of power in the whole State had been regulated with such a scrupulous regard to equality and equilibrium, that no one could say for certain, not even a native, whether the Constitution as a whole were an aristocracy or democracy or despotism. And no wonder: for if we confine our observation to the power of the consuls we should be inclined to regard it as despotic; if to that of the senate, as aristocratic; and if finally one looks at the power possessed by the people it would seem a clear case of democracy. . . .

Whenever any danger from without compels them to unite and work together, the strength which is developed by the State is so extraordinary that everything required is unfailingly carried out by the eager rivalry shown by all classes to devote their whole minds to the need of the hour. . . . When these external alarms are past, and the people are enjoying their good fortune and the fruits of their victories, and, as usually happens, growing corrupted by flattery and idleness, show a tendency to violence and arrogance, — it is in these circumstances, more than ever, that the Constitution is seen to possess within itself the power of correcting abuses. For when any one of the three classes becomes puffed up, and manifests an inclination to be contentious and unduly encroaching, . . . the proper equilibrium is maintained by the impulsiveness of the one part being checked by its fear of the other.

So Polybius tells of the power of Rome, and this, precisely, was the eighteenth and early nineteenth century notion of that mysterious entity called the British Constitution as a balanced division of the powers of government among king, nobles, and commons. It is the idea which permeated Disraeli's mind from his reading of

Bolingbroke and Burke, and which he dinned into the ears of unwilling Whigs with most damnable iteration.

Now it needs no comment to show how this system of constitutional checks indicates on its negative side a distrust of the encroaching selfishness of men. Positively, a constitutional government is the interlocking harmony of those institutions which are "the realized experience of a nation." It was on institutions indeed, those symbols and efficacies of the imagination, which swallow up the individual man in involuntary actions and then render back to him his life enriched by manifold associations, and whose traditional forms are the hands of the past laid caressingly on the present, — it was on institutions that Disraeli most often dwelt, with an eloquence less magnificent no doubt than Burke's, but with a shrewder practical sense. "The rights and liberties of a nation can only be preserved by institutions," he declared. "It is not the spread of knowledge or the march of intellect that will be found sufficient sureties for the public welfare in the crisis of a country's freedom." And he added, — justly it will be conceded by those who know the man, — "I would address myself to the English Radicals."

He was justified in appealing to those who set the whole people above the ruling sway of a class, because the first and great institution is of

the people conceived as a nation. This is the root of the matter: the State to the imagination is a vital reality, to the unimaginative sense it is a mere name for a collection of men living together in the same territory. The consequences that follow this distinction are far-reaching and practical. Let us take an example. The governments of today are piling up huge debts, and if this tendency continues unchecked there will come a time, and that not remote, when men will stagger under the burden of obligations laid on them by their fathers without their consent and for objects which may not always seem to have been wisely chosen. When that moment arrives the conception of nationality will be of the first importance in determining the course to be pursued. As the borrowers of today are acting with little sense of responsibility towards the future, so then there will be men ready to deny the power of the past to lay a mortgage on the present, and who will decline to accept the theory of a State or nation as a continuous entity which can make contracts and be held morally accountable after the manner of an individual. Rationalists of this kind may for a season be held from the repudiation of debts by the consequent difficulty of borrowing for the future; but this practical difficulty is by no means insurmountable, as actual revolutions have proved. On the other side will be those who think that an entity grasped by the imagination is just as

real to their spiritual life as an object visible before them is to their sensuous life. Their own happiness is so intimately bound up with these impalpable creations that to touch the honour or deny the moral sanctity of one of them would be an act of treason against the higher nature of mankind. They will sacrifice much of their physical ease to maintain the reality of these ideas, and it is hard to see how the foundations of morality can be preserved unless the material needs of the individual are held in check by this seemingly shadowy world of the imagination. I do not say that this is the whole of the matter, or that the idea of State responsibility is quite so insubstantial as it would appear to be from this argument. The material basis of the family points to something underlying the State of a similar, if vaguer and less stable, sort. But I believe that this sense of the reality of the large and traditionary creations of the imagination will be one of the controlling forces in right conduct.

And here another distinction demands attention. This conservative acceptance of the imaginative entity of the nation might seem to point directly to the Rousseauistic theory of the *volonté générale* and to socialism. But in fact the two tendencies are diametrically opposed, although they both lie in that field of abstractions where distinctions are extremely difficult to maintain. One is the consecration of the past, with its

lessons of caution and its comforts of attainment, the other rests on the exclusive claims of the present, or snatches a sanction from some fanciful idea of the future as a creation of human desires untrammelled by the realities of experience; one looks for something permanent and immutable through the chances and changes of time, the other knows no parent but mutability; the one recognizes a binding law of duty which cannot be abrogated by the interests of the living generation, the other asserts boldly that whatever the actual majority at any moment declares to be right is right; the one tends to absorb the personal desires and impulses of a man in the wider meanings of tradition, the other tends to intensify these personal motives as factors going to create the "general will," and naturally tends also to see the "general will" reflected in them; the one may be called the true illusion of the imagination which confirms a man in the upward motions of his nature, the other as a part of the false illusion which promises liberty but in the end leaves the soul a prey to its own downward gravitation. It is thus that conservatism lays stress on the ideas of the family and the State and thinks much of the virtues of patriotism, whereas socialism and its radical kindred are always inclined to turn away from the influences and duties of these institutions in favour of a conception of mankind as a whole, since in the very vagueness of that con-

ception all restraints and limitations are lost. Indeed, humanitarianism is precisely the conception of the *volonté générale* carried to its logical conclusion. Hence we find a conservative like Disraeli commending the part played by Lord George Bentinck "in the great contention between the patriotic and the cosmopolitan [he meant what is now commonly called "humanitarian"] principle which has hardly begun, and on the issue of which the fate of this island as a powerful community depends."

More particularly, as I have said, it was in Disraeli's mind the task of the new statesmanship to carry out this patriotic idea of the nation in the working of the Constitutional institutions. "By the Conservative Cause," he said in a speech as early as 1838, "I mean the splendour of the Crown, the lustre of the peerage, the privileges of the Commons, the rights of the poor. I mean that harmonious union, that magnificent concord of all interests, of all classes, on which our national greatness and prosperity depends" — large words, no doubt, and suited to the winecups over which they were pronounced, yet not without specific direction. To Disraeli the House of Commons was never representative of the people as a nation, but of a special class. Full representation, he believed, could not be obtained by the rough machinery of the polls; and one of the best of his early epigrams, which time has not proved un-

true, was aimed at measures intended to discredit the representative power of hereditary office: "In a hasty and factious effort to get rid of representation without election, it will be as well if eventually we do not discover that we have only obtained election without representation."

For the representation of the whole people Disraeli looked to the sovereign, both by virtue of his isolated preëminence, which should enable him to embrace the interests of all classes without prejudice or partiality, and by virtue of his power as a visible symbol of the State to give life and unity to the sympathies of patriotism. He thought, too, that the Crown was the natural bulwark of the people, in the narrower use of the word, against the encroachments of an oligarchy or plutocracy. "The privileges of the multitude," he declared, having the history of the past with him, whatever the future may hold, "and the prerogatives of the sovereign had grown up together, and together they had waned."

But if Disraeli looked askance at a factious oligarchy, he kept his hopes in a prescriptive and landed aristocracy. In the General Preface to the Novels, written in 1870, after long years of practical politics, he still professed faith in the old forms: "The feudal system may have worn out, but its main principle — that the tenure of property should be the fulfilment of duty — is

the essence of good government. The divine right of kings may have been a plea for feeble tyrants, but the divine right of government is the keystone of human progress, and without it governments sink into police, and a nation is degraded into a mob." Leaders the people will have, leadership there will be — if by no other means, then by brute force or deceptive flattery. Disraeli believed that in England this leadership was best obtained by an hereditary aristocracy. He was building again on the power of the imagination, holding that the insignia of authority handed down in one family were likely to bring to the wearer a surer sense of responsibility, and to others a willingness to be guided and to find in the upward-glancing comfort of reverence some compensation for the relative deprivations which discontent and envy have never yet abolished. And he would have subscribed heartily to this defense of prescription by a living leader of conservatism:

> It can hardly be doubted that the credit and respect by which all public employment in this country is surrounded, and which operates to make men sit on local bodies, value the distinction of the magistracy, and work with unremitting energy to obtain a seat in the House of Commons, is partly due to the union in the House of Lords of the two ideas of high rank and civic service.

Disraeli dwelt much on the value of an hereditary aristocracy, but he regarded it from no bigot's

point of view. "It is not true," he says, in his *Lord George Bentinck*, "that England is governed by an aristocracy in the common acceptation of the term. England is governed by an aristocratic principle. The aristocracy of England absorbs all aristocracies, and receives every man in every order and every class who defers to the principle of our society, which is to aspire and excel." He knew that the real force and stability of prescription must rest in the end on its success in fostering and symbolizing and absorbing that natural aristocracy which is the creation of character and talent. And if he failed in his philosophical system, and still more in his political practice, to bring the forms of government into harmony with this natural aristocracy, his failure was not entirely to his discredit.

The task of the conservative statesman, as a matter of fact, is in itself far more difficult than that of the liberal or radical. It is not required of the liberal that he should have any consistently elaborated scheme of government. His rôle is to face conditions as they are, in the spirit of an honourable opportunism, and to let the future take care of itself. He is content if he has, like Gladstone, "considered actions simply as they are in themselves." And as for the radical, he has in his favour all the vast powers of flattery, the natural feeling of men that what they at the moment desire is good and should be granted without

hindrance. More particularly his programme is easy at a time when man's innate restlessness has been lifted by false deductions from evolutionary science into a philosophy which regards all change as life and progress and condemns stability as stagnation and death.

Against these impelling forces what has the conservative to offer? To the seductions of flattery he can oppose only the cautions based on a distrust of human nature which in times of ordinary tranquillity wears the face of sullen pride. To overbid an opportunism which deals frankly with the material needs of the hour he is often forced to appeal to the intangible considerations of remote consequences and ancient precedents. It may be true that society is ultimately governed by the imagination, but he who in an assembly of practical men rises to defend existing institutions on this seemingly insubstantial ground is at an enormous disadvantage in comparison with one who has behind his arguments the urgency of the eager present. The conservative may at times have the selfishness of possession on his side, and indeed his strength is likely to depend on this contingent motive; but, especially in an age permeated by humanitarian sympathies, this occasional advantage may be often used by the radical to discredit him, while the liberal may be cajoled into siding with the radical by the belief that a

particular concession will entail no considerable loss or will even accrue to the profit of property.

It is not strange, therefore, that the history of England since the Revolution of 1688, with intervals of timid delay, has been the record of a gradual yielding to the steady thrust of opportunism. And this movement has been aided by the accidental fact that the leading conservatives have proved themselves inadequate to the great charge laid upon them. Some of them, such as Laud and his master, confused conservatism with an unwholesome reaction. Others, such as Hobbes, based their politics on a strained and logic-ridden philosophy. Filmer was childish. Bolingbroke lacked common honesty. Burke, the noblest of them all philosophically, was practically inefficient. And Disraeli had not only his origin against him, but suffered from disabilities of a more personal sort.

Above all things it behooves the conservative, who appeals to the imagination of men, to see that his own imagination is sound and true; and it is a fact which no admirer of Disraeli can deny, that his words sometimes ring false. One feels this shabby strain running through his novels; one regrets it now and then in the rhodomontade of his political addresses; the emotion which floats in his imagery is sometimes shallow when it pretends to be profound. The question of sincerity is inevitably raised. It is not fair to

charge Disraeli with treachery to Protection, as his enemies charged him so furiously in Parliament and on the hustings. Protection in his view was merely an incident in the larger cause of conservatism; and we now know that almost immediately after the Repeal he started to wean his party from their narrower self-concern. But withal one is bound to admit that certain of his actions, such for example as his denial of seeking office from Peel and his notorious plagiarism from Thiers, were below the Parliamentary standard of honour. In comparison with Gladstone he was a philosopher and statesman; he was a genius opposed to a man of great talent — as it is fair to say that conservatism is in general the intuition of genius, whereas liberalism is the efficiency of talent. But there was yet something in the character of Gladstone which inspired confidence despite the most flagrant vicissitudes of his policy; something that Disraeli lacked. Sincerity is an elusive quality, hard to define. When in 1852 Disraeli, in the new rôle of Chancellor of the Exchequer, brought forward his first budget, it was not only torn to pieces by Gladstone, but was made the occasion of a scathing diatribe against his political foe. So bitter was Gladstone's personal antipathy that it is plausibly given as one of the motives which led him to refuse office in Derby's Cabinet and to throw himself openly into the Liberal party. And this is Gladstone's

account of the debate to his wife: "I had therefore to begin by attacking him for these [personalities]. . . . My great object was to show the Conservative party how their leader was hoodwinking and bewildering them. . . . *God knows I have no wish to give him pain.*" There is in that underscored clause a mark of the particular sort of self-deception that is often, and not unjustly, denounced as British middle-class cant. Of that kind of insincerity Disraeli was singularly free. But there was a strain of falseness in Disraeli's mind which, if not exactly a mark of insincerity, comes perilously near throwing discredit on his whole career.

No candid man can endure patiently the falsetto note in his laudation of the Jews, or the cloudy mysticism in which he wrapt up his everlasting allusions to the "Eastern Question." Critics and biographers have asked in bewilderment what he meant by this eastern question; the answer is too disconcertingly simple. Doubtless Disraeli had some genuine theories in regard to the indestructible virtues of race; doubtless, too, he believed in a way that the spiritual elements of civilization come entirely from the Semitic peoples, and that theocracy, which in his mind seems to have been identified with spirituality, is the only safeguard in a State against a retrogressive equalitarianism; but in the end I fear that by the mystery of the East Disraeli

meant just himself. He was to himself the embodiment of race; he was to be the Messiah of the State. The truth is that, alongside of the conception of religion which he took over from Burke, and which rests on the power of the religious imagination as an inward-drawing check on man's outreaching desires, he was too fond of preaching what may be called a creed of infinite expansion from himself as the centre of the universe.

And something of the same sort may be said of Disraeli's political philosophy. The sound elements of his system, those on which I have dwelt almost exclusively in this essay, were borrowed largely from Burke and dressed up in his own lively style. But the imperialism associated with Beaconsfield's name is not only foreign to Burke's theory of prescriptive and natural aristocracy, but is in some respects directly hostile to it. The aim of Burke was to set the stability of aristocratic institutions against the innate restlessness of human nature and to use the imagination as a force for order and self-restraint and political health. Disraeli also saw the need of this practical organ of control, but it must be admitted that, for the renown of success, he was too ready to preserve the aristocracy as a kind of ornament of society, while diverting the people with the glamour of imperialistic expansion as a sop for their lust of power.

There is this duplicity, if not insincerity, at the centre of Disraeli's mind, and our attitude towards him is likely to change as we look at this or the other aspect of his career. But after all reservations are made, I believe that the balance must be set down in favour of his courageous and shrewd insistence on the principles of a sound conservatism. Personally, we shall, perhaps, long continue to picture him as "that old Jew gentleman"; but the time may come when, alarmed by the policy of drifting, we shall be glad to think of him as still, through his philosophy of government, "sitting on the top of chaos."

THE NEW MORALITY

THE NEW MORALITY

SOME ten or twelve years ago a certain young woman, then fresh from the hands of an esteemed but erratic professor of English literature, wrote a novel the plot of which was roughly as follows. A college graduate suddenly finds himself the inheritor of a shoe factory in a New England town. Filled with the benevolent ideas absorbed in the academic contemplation of economics, he undertakes to introduce profit-sharing with his employees and otherwise to conduct his business for the benefit of the community. So far, good. But hard times follow, and his competitors by lowering wages and reducing labour are able to undersell him. Now there is in his control a considerable sum of money which a widow had entrusted to his father to invest for her, and the question arises whether he shall shut down his mills and inflict suffering upon his men, or shall divert this trust fund to his business and so try to tide over the period of stress. He yields to his sympathies and virtually embezzles the trust fund; but fails nevertheless, and with his own loss brings ruin upon the widow. The story was called *The Burden of Christopher*, with the implication that the hero was a bearer

of Christ in his misfortune, and the author indicates pretty clearly her sentiment that in surrendering his personal integrity for the expected good of his working people he was following the higher of two conflicting codes of ethics.

The book no doubt has gone its own way to the "limbo large and broad," where the heroes of ancient fiction wander with

> Embrios and idiots, eremites and friars;

but it made a lasting impression on one reader at least as the first popular presentation to come under his notice of a theory which now confronts him wherever he turns his eyes. There has, in fact, been an astonishing divulgation in the past decade of what is called, with magnificent audacity, the New Morality.

Perhaps the most honoured teacher of this code is the mistress of Hull House, who by her devoted life and her services to the people of Chicago in various times of need has won the right to speak with a certain authority for the striving generation of the day. And in one of her books, the *Newer Ideals of Peace*, Miss Addams tells of an actual occurrence and infers a moral which points in the same direction as the novel of *Christopher*. A family of five children is left motherless. The father, a drunkard, disappears, and the household is left to the care of a feeble old grandmother. Thereupon work is found for

the oldest boy, "a fine, manly little fellow" of twelve, who feels keenly "his obligation to care for the family." But after a time he becomes "listless and indifferent," and at sixteen turns to professional tramping. "It was through such bitter lessons as these," observes Miss Addams, "we learned that good intentions and the charitable impulse do not always work for righteousness." As the story is told there is a plain implication that to find work for a boy under such circumstances is "cruel and disastrous" (her own comment), and that society, and not his own nature, was responsible for his relapse. One would suppose that scarcely an honest workman, or prosperous merchant, or successful professional man had ever taken up the burden of a family in youth or childhood. Doubtless hardships and waste often come from the exigencies of life, but there is not a single word in Miss Addams' account to indicate that she has felt the need of developing in the future citizen a sensitiveness to the peculiar duties that will confront him, or has reflected on the evil that might have been done the boy if he had been relieved of his natural obligations and supported by society. "Our democracy," as she says with approval, "is making inroads upon the family, the oldest of human institutions."

This is not an isolated case in Miss Addams' works, nor does it in any wise misrepresent her.

In another book, *The Spirit of Youth and the City Streets*, the thesis is maintained and reiterated, that crime is for the most part merely the result of repressing a wholesome "love for excitement" and "desire for adventure." In the year 1909 "there were arrested and brought into court [in Chicago] fifteen thousand young people under the age of twenty, who had failed to keep even the common law of the land. Most of these young people had broken the law in their blundering efforts to find adventure." The inference to be drawn here and throughout the book is that one need only relieve the youth of the land from the necessity of "assuming responsibility prematurely," affording them meanwhile abundant amusement, and the instincts of lawlessness and the pursuit of criminal pleasure will vanish, or almost vanish, of themselves — as if there were no Harry Thaws and the sons of the rich were all virtuous.

But it must not be supposed that Hull House occupies a place of lonely isolation as the fountain of these ideas. From every self-authorized centre of civic virtue in which a type-writer is at work, the stream proceeds. The very presses groan, as we used to say when those machines were still in the mythological stage, at their labour of supplying the world with the new intellectual pabulum. At this moment there lies before the writer of this essay a pile of books,

all recently published, which are devoted more or less specifically to the subject, and from all of which, if he had courage to go through them, he might cull abundant examples and quotations. He was, indeed, about to enter this "hollow cave, amid the thickest woods," when, an unvaliant knight, he heard the warning of the lady Una:

> Yea but (quoth she) the perill of this place
> I better wot then you, though now too late
> To wish you backe returne with foule disgrace,
> Yet wisedome warnes, whilest foot is in the gate,
> To stay the steppe, ere forced to retrate.

We have in fact to deal with the consummation of a long and deep-seated revolution, and there is no better way to understand the true character of the movement than by turning aside a moment to glance at its historical sources. This attempt to find some basis of conduct to take the place of the older conception of personal integrity, as we see it exemplified in the works of Miss Jane Addams and a host of other modern writers, is in fact only one aspect of the slow drift from mediæval religion to humanitarianism. For a thousand years and well into the second thousand the ethical feeling of Christian Europe may be said to have taken its colour from the saying, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" — which in extreme cases was interpreted as if it read, If he

reform the whole world; and on the other, kindred saying, "Sell all that thou hast and distribute unto the poor, and thou shall have treasure in heaven, and come, follow me" — in which the command of charity was held to be not so much for the benefit of the poor as for the liberation of the giver's own soul from the powers of this world. Such was the law, and its binding force was confirmed by the conception of a final day of wrath when the souls of men should stand before a merciless tribunal and be judged to everlasting joy or everlasting torment. The vivid reality of the fear that haunted men, at least in their moments of reflection, may be understood from the horrors of such a picture as Michael Angelo's *Last Judgment*, or from the meditations of one of the most genial of English cavaliers. In his little treatise on *Man in Darkness* — appropriate title — Henry Vaughan puts the frank question to himself:

> And what madness then is it, for the enjoying of one minute's pleasure for the satisfaction of our sensual corrupt appetite, to lie forever in a bed of burning brass, in the lake of eternal and unquenchable fire? "Suppose," saith the same writer [Drexelius], "that this whole globe of earth were nothing else but a huge mass or mountain of sand, and that a little wren came but once in every thousand years to fetch away but one grain of that huge heap; what an innumerable number of years would be spent before that world of sand could be so fetched away! And yet, alas! when the damned

have lain in that fiery lake so many years as all those would amount to, they are no nearer coming out than the first hour they entered in."

No doubt practice and precept were at variance then, as to a certain extent they are at all times, and there were many texts in the Bible which might be taken to mitigate the harsher commands; but such in its purest, highest form was the law, and in the more sensitive minds this conception of the soul naked before a judging God must have created a tremendous anxiety. Morality was obedience and integrity; it scorned the world for an ideal of inner righteousness; it created a sense of individual responsibility for every word and deed; and, say what we will, there is something magnificent in this contempt for the reckoning of other men beside that eternal fame which

> . . . lives and speaks aloft by those pure eyes,
> And perfect witness of all-judging Jove.

But there was also in this law something repellent and even monstrous. Who has not shuddered with amazement at the inscription which Dante set over the portal of Hell: E 'L PRIMO AMORE? Was it Love that prepared those winding coils of torture to enclose for endless time the vast majority of mankind? Was it even justice to make the everlasting doom of a soul depend on its grasp of truth in these few years

spent in a world of shadows and illusions? There is something repulsively irrational in the notion of an unchanging eternity suspended on the action in a moment of time — *ex hoc momento pendet æternitas.* It should seem to be unthinkable, if it had not actually been thought. As a matter of fact the rigour and crudity of this doctrine had been mitigated in the Middle Ages by the interposition between man and God of the very human institution of the Church, with its substitution of temporal penances and pardons and an interposed Purgatory in place of the terrible paradox of irrevocable judgment. It remained for the Reformation, and particularly for the Calvinistic Puritans, to tear away those veils of compromise and bring man face to face with the awful abstraction he had created. The result was for a while a great hardening and strengthening of character, salutary indeed after what may be called the almost hypocritical compromise of Catholicism; but in the end human nature could not endure the rigidity of its own logic, and in revolting turned not to another compromise but to questioning the very hypothesis of its faith.

The inevitable reaction from the intolerable logic of the Protestants was Deism, in which God was stript altogether of his judicial and moral attributes and reduced to a kind of immanent, all-benevolent force in nature. "But now

comes a modern Sage," says Warburton of Bolingbroke, ". . . who tells us 'that they made the Basis of Religion far too wide; that men have no further concern with GOD than TO BELIEVE THAT HE IS, which his *physical attributes* make fully manifest; but, that he is *a rewarder of them who diligently seek him*, Religion doth not require us to believe, since this depends on God's MORAL ATTRIBUTES, of which we have no conception.'" But the deistic position was manifestly untenable, for it left no place for the undeniable existence of evil in this world and life. From the unaccountable distribution of wrong and suffering the divine had argued the certainty of adjustment in a future state; the deist had flown in the face of facts by retaining the belief in a benevolent Providence while taking from it the power of supernatural retribution; the atheist was more logical, he denied the existence of Providence altogether and turned the universe over to chance or blind law. Such was the progress of thought from Baxter to Bolingbroke and from Bolingbroke to Hume.

The positive consequences of this evolution are written large in the literature of the eighteenth century. With the idea of an avenging deity and a supernatural test there disappeared also the sense of deep personal responsibility; the very notion of a radical and fundamental difference between good and evil was lost. The

evil that is apparent in character comes to be regarded merely as the result of the restraining and thwarting institutions of society as these exist — why, no one can explain. Envy and jealousy and greed and the sheer lust of power, all those traits which were summed up in the single Greek word *pleonexia*, *the desire to have more*, are not inherent in the human heart, but are artificially introduced by property and a false civilization. Change these institutions or release the individual entirely from restrictions, and his nature will recoil spontaneously to its natural state of virtue. He needs only follow the impulse of his instinctive emotions to be sound and good. And as a man feels of himself, so he feels of others. There is no real distinction between the good and the evil, but all are naturally good and the superficial variations we see are caused by the greater or less freedom of development. Hence we should condemn no man even as we do not condemn ourselves. There is no place for sharp judgment, and the laws which impose penalties and restrictions and set up false discriminations between the innocent and the criminal are subject to suspicion and should be made as flexible as possible. In place of judgment we are to regard all mankind with sympathy; a sort of emotional solidarity becomes the one great virtue, in which are included, or rather sunk, all the law and the prophets.

It was the great work of the eighteenth century, beginning in England and developing in France, to formulate this change and indoctrinate with it the mind of the unthinking masses. Here is not the place to follow the development in detail, and those who care to see its outcome may be referred to the keen and unjustly neglected chapters on the *philosophes* in La Harpe's *Lycée.* To those, indeed, who are acquainted with the philosophical writings that preceded and introduced the French Revolution, the epithet "new" as it is attached to our present-day morality may seem a bit presumptuous; for it would be difficult to find a single fundamental idea in current literature on this subject which could not be closely paralleled by a quotation from Rousseau, or Diderot, or Helvétius, or one of their compeers. Thus, in our exaltation of sympathy above judgment and of the unrestrained emotions generally as the final rule of character, we are but following Diderot's philosophy of the heart: "Les passions amorties dégradent les hommes extraordinaires"; and when we read in Ellen Key and a host of other feminist liberators the apotheosis of love as higher than any divine or human obligations, we are but meeting again with Toussaint's religion a little disguised: "On aime de même Dieu et sa maîtresse." Our revolt from constitutional law as a power imposed by the slower reflection of

men upon their own immediate desires and opinions is essentially the same as the restlessness consecrated by the French *économistes* in the phrase, "le despotisme légal." And, to return whence we began, the economics of Hull House flow only too easily from Helvétius' definition of virtue as "le désir du bien public," and from his more specific statement: "The integrity which is related to an individual or to a small society is not the true integrity; integrity considered in relation to the public is the only kind that really deserves and generally obtains the name."

Miss Addams herself has been disturbed by these reminiscences. Thus she quotes from one of the older humanitarians a characteristic saying: "The love of those whom a man does not know is quite as elemental a sentiment as the love of those whom a man does know," and repudiates it as vague and unpractical beside the New Morality. She ought to know, and may be right; yet it is not easy to see wherein her own ethics are any less vague when she deplores the act of a boy who goes to work for his starving grandmother because in doing so he is unfitting himself for future service to society. And as for effectiveness, it might seem that the French Revolution was a practical result fairly equivalent in magnitude to what has been achieved by our college settlements. But Miss Addams is by

no means peculiar in this assumption of originality. Nothing is more notable in the humanitarian literature of the day than the feeling that our own age is severed from the past and opens an entirely new epoch in history. "*The race has now crossed the great divide of human history!*" exclaims an hysterical doctor of divinity in a book just published. "The tendency of the long past has been toward *diversity*, that of the longer future will be toward *oneness*. The change in this stream of tendency is not a temporary deviation from its age-long course — a new bend in the river. It is an actual reversal of the current, which beyond a peradventure will prove permanent." To this ecstatic watcher the sudden reversal took place at no remote date, but yesterday; and by a thousand other watchers the same miracle is vociferously heralded. Beyond a peradventure! Not a little of this flattering assumption is due to the blind and passionate hope of the human heart clamouring against the voice of experience. So many prophets before now have cried out, looking at the ever-flowing current of time, and having faith in some Thessalian magic:

> Cessavere vices rerum.
> . . . Amnisque cucurrit
> Non qua pronus erat.

So often the world has been disappointed; but at last we have seen — beyond a peradventure. If

the vicissitudes of fate have not ceased, yet at least we have learned to look with complacency on the very law of mutation from which the eyes of men had hitherto turned away in bewildered horror, at last the stream has turned back upon its sources, and change itself is carrying us no longer towards diversity, but towards the consummation of a divine oneness.

But it would equally be an error to insist too dogmatically on the continuity of the present-day movement with that of the eighteenth century; for one generation is never quite as another. We must not forget that for a hundred years or thereabout there was a partial reaction against the doctrines of the *philosophes*, during which time the terrors of the Revolution lay like a warning nightmare in the imagination of the more thoughtful men. A hundred years is a long period for the memory to bridge, particularly in a time when the historical sense has been weakened. Superficially, too, the application of the theory is in some respects different from what it was; the law of social sympathy has been developed into different conceptions of socialism, and we have devised fresh schemes for giving efficacy to the immediate will of the people. Even deeper is the change that has come over the attitude of religious organizations towards the movement. In the age of the Revolution the Church, both Catholic and Protestant, was still strongly

entrenched in the old beliefs and offered a violent resistance to the substitutions of humanitarianism for responsibility to the priest and to God. Now this last barrier has been almost swept away. Indeed, not the least remarkable feature of this literature is the number of clergymen who are contributing to it, with their constant appeal to the New Morality as the test of faith. Open one of these books before us — let us take *The Christian Reconstruction of Modern Life*, for the promise of its title — and you will be pretty likely to come upon such a passage as this: "Faith's fellowship with Jesus is one with the realization of our fellowship in humanity"; or, on another page: "If the fundamental of the true philosophy cannot be found by common men, what advantage in any man's finding it? If life's secret, direction, and power . . . is not attainable by the lowliest, then a man of this age, living in the social passion of our time, is forced to be indifferent to that which would be the monopoly of a few gifted souls." If such a social passion means anything, it means the reconstruction of life to the level of the gutter. It is the modern sham righteousness which would have called from Jesus the same utter scorn as that which he poured upon the Pharisaical cant of his own day. Yet it is not in religious books alone that you will meet with this sort of irreligion. For one sermon you will hear on the ob-

ligation of the individual soul to its maker and judge, and on the need of personal regeneration and the beauty of holiness, you will hear a score on the relation of a man to his fellows and on the virtue of social sympathy. In effect, the first and great commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind," has been almost forgotten for the second, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Worship in the temple is no longer a call to contrition and repentance, but an organized flattery of our human nature, and the theological seminary is fast becoming a special school for investigating poverty and spreading agnosticism. In this sense, or degree, that humanitarianism is no longer opposed by organized religion, but has itself usurped the place of the Church, the New Morality may really justify its name.

What are the results of this glorification of humanity? What does the New Morality mean in life and conduct? Well, of such matters it is wise to speak cautiously. The actual morals of an age are an extremely complicated and elusive network of facts, and it is only too easy to generalize from incomplete observation. On the other hand we must guard against allowing ourselves to be deceived by the fallacy everywhere heard, that, because the preacher has always, even from the remotest record of Egypt, bewailed his own

times as degenerate, therefore no age has fallen off in morality from its predecessor. Such an argument is a complete *non-sequitur;* there have been periods of degeneration, and there may yet be. As for our own age, only a fool would dogmatize; we can only balance and surmise. And in the first place a certain good must almost certainly be placed to the credit of humanitarianism. It has softened us and made us quicker to respond to the sufferings of others; the direct and frightful cruelty that runs through the annals of history like a crimson line has been largely eliminated from civilization, and with it a good deal of the brutality of human nature. We sometimes hear the present age compared with the later Roman Republic and the Empire, and in some respects speciously, but the callousness of the greater Romans to human misery and their hardness are almost unthinkable to-day. Consider a sentence or two from Appian: "The head and hand of Cicero were suspended for a long time from the rostra in the forum where formerly he had been accustomed to make public speeches, and more people came together to behold this spectacle than had previously come to listen to him. It is said that even at his meals Antony placed the head of Cicero before his table, until he became satiated with the horrid sight." Such an episode scarcely stands out from the hideous story of the Civil Wars; to the modern reader it

brings a feeling almost of physical sickness. So much we seem to have gained, and the change in this respect even from our own seventeenth century shows that the credit is due in no small part to the general trend of humanitarianism.

But in other directions the progress is not so clear. Statistics are always treacherous witnesses, but so far as we can believe them and interpret them we can draw no comfort from the prevalence of crime and prostitution and divorce and insanity and suicide. At least, whatever may be the cause of this inner canker of society, our social passion seems to be powerless to cure it. Some might even argue that the preaching of any doctrine which minimizes personal responsibility is likely to increase the evil. Certainly a teacher who, like Miss Jane Addams, virtually attributes the lawless and criminal acts of our city hoodlums to a wholesome desire of adventure which the laws unrighteously repress, would appear to be encouraging the destructive and sensual proclivities which are too common in human nature, young and old. Nor are the ways of honesty made clear by a well-known humanitarian judge of Denver, who refused to punish a boy for stealing a Sunday-School teacher's pocketbook, for the two good reasons, as his honour explained in a public address, "that the boy was not responsible, and, secondly, that there were bigger thieves in the pews upstairs."

So, too, a respectable woman of New York who asks whether it may not be a greater wrong for a girl to submit to the slavery of low wages than to sell herself in the street, is manifestly not helping the tempted to resist. She is even doing what she can with her words to confuse the very bounds of moral and physical evil.

There is, in fact, a terrible confusion hidden in the New Morality, an ulcerous evil that is ever working inward. Sympathy, creating the desire for even-handed justice, is in itself an excellent motive of conduct, and the stronger it grows, the better the world shall be. But sympathy, spoken with the word "social" prefixed, as it commonly is on the platforms of the day, begins to take on a dangerous connotation. And "social sympathy" erected into a theory which leaves out of account the responsibility of the individual and seeks to throw the blame of evil on the laws and on society, though it may effect desirable reforms here and there in institutions, is bound to leave the individual weakened in his powers of resistance against the temptations which can never be eliminated from human life. The whole effect of calling sympathy justice and putting it in the place of judgment is to relax the fibre of character and nourish the passions at the expense of reason and the will. And undoubtedly the conviction is every day gaining ground among cool observers of our life that the man-

ners and morals of the people are beginning to suffer from this relaxation in many insidious ways apart from acts which come into the cognizance of the courts. The sensuality of the prevailing music and dancing, the plays that stir the country as organs of moral regeneration, the exaggeration of sex in the clothing seen in the street, are but symptoms more or less ominous to our mind as we do or do not connect them with the regnant theory of ethics. And in the end this form of social sympathy may itself quite conceivably bring back the brutality and cruelty from which it seems to have delivered us. The Roman who gloated over the head of his and the people's enemy lived two thousand years ago, and we think such bloodthirstiness is no longer possible in public life. Yet not much more than a century ago the preaching of social sympathy could send a Lebon and his kind over France with an insatiable lust for killing, complicated with Sadism, while in Paris the leader of the government of the most civilized country of Europe was justifying such a régime on the pious principle that, "when the sovereign people exercises its power, we can only bow before it; in all it does all is virtue and truth, and no excess, error, or crime is possible." The animal is not dead within us, but only asleep. If you think he has been really conquered, read what he has been doing in Congo and to the Putumayo Indians, or

among the redeemers of the Balkan States. Or if you wish to get a glimpse of what he may yet do under the spur of social sympathy, consider the callous indifference shown by the labour unions to the revelation, if it deserves the name, of the system of dynamiting and murder employed in the service of "class-consciousness." These things are to be taken into account, not as bugbears, for society at large is no doubt sound at heart and will arouse itself at last against its false teachers, but as symptoms to warn and prepare.[1]

To some few the only way out of what seems a state of moral blindness is through a return to an acknowledgment of the responsibility of the individual soul to its maker and inflexible judge. They may be right. Who can tell what reversal of belief may lie before us or what religious revolution may be preparing in the heart of infidelity? But for the present, at least, that supernatural control has lost its general efficacy and even from the pulpit has only a slight and intermittent appeal. Nor does such a loss appear without its compensations when we consider the harshness of medieval theology or the obliquities of superstition that seem to be inherent in the purest of religions. Meanwhile, the troubled individual, whatever his scepticism may be, need not be withheld from confirming his moral

[1] All this was written and printed, I need scarcely say, before the outbreak of the European war. I should not to-day refer to the Congo and the Putumayo Indians for the savagery underlying civilization.

faith by turning from the perverted doctrine of the "Enlightenment" and from its recrudescence in modern humanitarianism to a larger and higher philosophy. For there is a faith which existed long before the materialism of the eighteenth century and before the crude earlier anthropomorphism, and which persisted unchanged, though often half-concealed, through those ages and still persists as a kind of shamefast inheritance of truth. It is not necessary to go to ancient books to recover that faith. Let a man cease for a moment to look so strenuously upon what is right for his neighbours. Let him shut out the voices of the world and disregard the stream of informing books which pour upon him from the modern press, as the "floud of poyson" was spewed upon Spenser's Knight from "Errours den":

> Her fruitful cursed spawne of serpents small.

Let him retire into himself, and in the silence of such recollection examine his own motives and the sources of his self-approval and discontent. He will discover there in that dialogue with himself, if his abstraction is complete and sincere, that his nature is not simple and single, but dual, and the consequences to him in his judgment of life and in his conduct will be of incalculable importance. He will learn, with a conviction which no science or philosophy falsely so-called can

shake, that beside the passions and wandering desires and blind impulses and the cravings for pleasure and the prod of sensations there is something within him and a part of him, rather in some way his truer self, which controls and checks and knows and pronounces judgment, unmoved amid all motion, unchanged amid continual change, of everlasting validity above the shifting valuations of the moment. He may not be able to express this insight in terms that will satisfy his own reason or will convince others, but if his insight is true he will not waver in loyalty to it, though he may sin against it times without number in spoken word and impulsive deed. Rather, his loyalty will be confirmed by experience. For he will discover that there is a happiness of the soul which is not the same as the pleasure of fulfilled desires, whether these be for good or for ill, a happiness which is not dependent upon the results of this or that choice among our desires, but upon the very act itself of choice and self-control, and which grows with the habit of staying the throng of besetting and conflicting impulses always until the judicial *fiat* has been pronounced. It is thus that happiness is the final test of morality, bringing with it a sense of responsibility to the supernatural command within the soul of the man himself, as binding as the laws of religion and based on no disputable revelation or outer authority. Such a morality is neither old nor

new, and stands above the varying customs of society. It is not determined essentially by the relation of a man to his fellows or by their approval, but by the consciousness of rightness in the man's own breast, — in a word, by character. Its works are temperance, truth, honesty, trustworthiness, fortitude, magnanimity, elevation; and its crown is joy.

Then, under the guidance of this intuition, a man may turn his eyes upon the world with no fear of being swayed by the ephemeral winds of doctrine. Despite the clamour of the hour he will know that the obligation to society is not the primal law and is not the source of personal integrity, but is secondary to personal integrity. He will believe that social justice is in itself desirable, but he will hold that it is far more important to preach first the responsibility of each man to himself for his own character. He will admit that equality of opportunity is an ideal to be aimed at, but he will think this a small thing in comparison with the universality of duty. In his attitude towards mankind he will not deny the claims of sympathy, but he will listen first to the voice of judgment:

> Away with charity that soothes a lie,
> And thrusts the truth with scorn and anger by.

He will be sensitive to the vast injustices of life and its wide-spread sorrows, but he will not be

seduced by that compassion into the hypocrisy of saying that "the love of those whom a man does not know is quite as elemental a sentiment as the love of those whom a man does know." Nor, in repudiating such a falsehood, will he, like the mistress of Hull Hall, lose his power of discrimination under the stress of "those vast and dominant suggestions of a new peace and holiness," that is "to issue forth from broken human nature itself, out of the pathetic striving of ordinary men." Rather, he will, at any cost, strive to clear away the clouds of cant, and so open his mind to the dictates of the everlasting morality.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE WAR

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE WAR

(These reflections were written down in the month of November, 1914, and published anonymously in the *Unpopular Review* of the January following. It has seemed to me better to make no attempt to alter the tone of the article in order to suit the time and circumstances of its present publication.)

WILL my readers be generous enough to accept the disavowal of arrogance in the title of this essay? They may be assured that, if the writer makes any pretensions to philosophy, it is only on the very modest basis of the Horatian command to wonder at nothing — *nil admirari.* Sitting in his study and conning the daily reports of the war and some of the innumerable opinions it has called into type, going about among his friends and listening with stopped mouth to their clamorous comments, such a man might well be impressed by the wide-spread surprise and consternation over the grim reality thrust upon us, and might be saddened by his inability to share in those feelings. He would be humiliated at times by the reproach of pessimism; and so would try to flatter himself with the hope that his lack of wonder was philosophical, and that perhaps others were not so much amazed as, in their desire to appear humane, their words seemed to imply.

For, after all, what are the facts? Just one hundred years ago Europe was coming out of the madness of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, exhausted and apparently chastened. But a century is a long time to those who believe in the acceleration of Progress. Well, just fifty years ago our Civil War was dragging to its end, and since then we have seen this succession of conflicts: the German-Austrian, the Franco-Prussian, the Servo-Bulgarian, the Turco-Russian, the Spanish-American, the Anglo-Boer, the Greco-Turkish, the Russo-Japanese, the Italo-Tripolitan, the Balkan, and now the European. That is a war at an average interval of about four and one-half years, with rather increasing frequency towards the close of the period; and still the list takes no account of campaigns and conquests which might with some propriety be called wars, of internal dissensions which threatened or actually effected revolution, and of the ceaseless fighting in which no European country was involved. Ten years was the period which Frederick the Great, calculating from history in his day, gave for the recurrence of war. It can scarcely be said that within the memory of men now growing old we have known an era of peace, whatever may be the fortunes of the coming generation.

What, then, is the cause of the sudden dismay at this latest apparition of war? Why are

thoughtful men like ex-President Taft, men who have kept a wary eye on the doings of mankind, "stunned," as they say, by the tale of what is happening? No doubt the sheer extent of the action, the millions of soldiers engaged, has something to do with their feeling, for we are all of us more or less subject to the glamour of magnitude, and think because a thing is larger its quality must be different. No doubt, too, the imagination is oppressed by the devilishness of the new machinery of death, by the power of the long-range guns, the insidious terror of craft that smite inhumanly under cover of the water and drop destruction from the clouds. We have never known these things before, and it is almost as if we were in the position of a too cunning Frankenstein, shuddering at the demon he had created for his own ruin. Or it is as if we were finding something more than fiction in the fable of the Erewhonians, who feared lest the machines they had invented might, in the process of evolution, develop into self-conscious automata, and become the masters of man instead of his slaves. You will remember how the people of Butler's Utopian land argued the matter:

> There is no security [they said] against the ultimate development of mechanical consciousness, in the fact of machines possessing little consciousness now. A mollusc has not much consciousness. Reflect upon the extraordinary advance which machines have made during

the last few hundred years, and note how slowly the animal and vegetable kingdoms are advancing. The more highly organized machines are creatures not so much of yesterday, as of the last five minutes, so to speak, in comparison with past time. . . .

The servant glides by imperceptible approaches into the master; and we have come to such a pass that, even now, man must suffer terribly on ceasing to benefit the machines. . . . Man's very soul is due to machines; it is a machine-made thing: he thinks as he thinks, and feels as he feels, through the work that machines have wrought upon him. . . .

They have preyed upon man's groveling preference for his material over his spiritual interests, and have betrayed him into supplying that element of struggle and warfare without which no race can advance. The lower animals progress because they struggle with one another; the weaker die, the stronger breed and transmit their strength. The machines, being of themselves unable to struggle, have got man to do their struggling for them: as long as he fulfils this function duly, all goes well with him — at least he thinks so.

Such was the terror of the fabulous Erewhonians at their own inventions. It is not extravagant to say that a part of our present dismay is due to the spectacle of the huge war engines that dwarf their makers and control the strategy of armies, seeming to possess a kind of independent and maleficent will of their own. We are terrified by the demon of savagery set loose by the spirit of our science.

But beyond the mere effect of numbers and of machinery on the imagination there is a deeper

dismay at what appears to be the moral collapse of civilization and the reversal of all our hopes. The other wars we could somehow explain away. They were already covered with the mist of the past, or they were fought out in some remote island or continent, or were between nations of Europe that have lingered behind in the march of Progress. But now the issue is thrust upon us. Has all our increase of knowledge come to this, and shall one of the literary harlequins of London cry out with impunity that the age of science is preëminently the age of war? Must all the talk of peace and the brotherhood of man for these fifty or these hundred years end in the human shambles? Have our wisest prophets, our contrivers of hope, been leading us astray all this time with false lights? And is he the only philosopher who can comfort himself with the words of a poet more than two thousand years old?

> Not now I learn that life is but a shadow;
> Nor should I fear to say the seeming wise,
> And those who build high arguments of hope,
> In our dejection bear the larger blame.
> For still of all mankind not one hath peace:
> Fortune may smile, and such a lot I count
> More prosperous indeed — but happy, no man!

Let me be explicit. I am not a Nietzschean advocate of war, gloating over the preachers of peace; I am not a victim of despair; my prayer is always: "Woe, and still woes; yet shall the good

prevail." But to one who tries to analyse the present state of mind in America it must be evident that the contrast between our exaltation of peace and the actuality of things has produced a nervous bewilderment not unlike that of Falkland in the English Revolution, who, as Clarendon says, "sitting among his friends, often, after a deep silence and frequent sighs, would, with a shrill and sad accent, ingeminate the word *Peace, Peace;* and would passionately profess, that the very agony of the war, and the view of the calamities and desolation the kingdom did and must endure, took his sleep from him, and would shortly break his heart." So are we, and it may be well for us to examine into the causes of our disillusion and dismay.

Now it used to be the belief of the Greeks, a superstitious people the advocates of progress may call them, yet after all one of the great promoters of civilization, that the invisible powers behind the things we see were wont to observe the thoughts and actions of mankind with watchful jealousy, and were particularly quick to avenge those who, from arrogance or folly, forgot, as the saying was, to "think as mortals." Upon the minds of such men they sent a nemesis, in the form of madness or dazed bewilderment. *Atê* it was named. And to one listening to-day to the language of the press and the street it might almost seem as if that belief was not an idle myth.

Certainly our excitement wears a face strangely like that of the dæmonic Atê, and suggests that we, too, instead of facing the truth of human nature, may have been floating for these hundred years in a haze of arrogant unreality. I say "we," meaning of course not the sober unregarded minority, but the ideologues who have had the ear of the multitude. To think as a mortal is to compromise, to mediate, to find the golden mean; whereas we have been hearkening, now to one and now to another of two extreme and utterly opposed philosophies of life.

On the one hand the century, especially in its latter decades, has been filled with the noise of the prophets of war and of might as in itself the supreme and only right. Germany, no doubt, has been the most active workshop of this propaganda, with its spirit of militarism and its ideal of the Superman. Strange rumors are troubling the brain of the good, unreading citizen. He is hearing the name of a certain Nietzsche, who has travestied Darwinism into a philosophy of the Will to Power, and has taught thousands of Germans that "active sympathy for the weak is more dangerous to the human race than any crime," and that "at the bottom of all distinguished races the beast of prey is not to be mistaken." The newspapers are telling him of a certain Treitschke, with a whole school of lesser historians behind him, who has been drilling

university students to believe that "a nation's military efficiency is the exact coefficient of a nation's idealism," and that "war is the greatest factor in the furtherance of culture." And then, perhaps, his attention is called to a startling book by a retired cavalry general of the German army, Friedrich von Bernhardi, who not only declared a war of annihilation with Great Britain the one thing necessary for his country, but foresaw with astonishing precision how this war was to be waged.

Words such as these seem now to reverberate with the very sound of the Prussian guns; they terrify us. But are we as innocent as we appear? May it not be that to some extent our innocence is a more flattering name for indolence of brain and aversion to plain language? I suspect that, more than we were aware, we have been led by the sophisms of science to bow before the image of the Superman. Our Manchester economics, our business expansion, and our practical politics have not been entirely unsupported by an inarticulate, sometimes a fairly articulate, philosophy of success at any hazard, which has an odd resemblance to Nietzsche's perversion of the evolutionary law of struggle and survival. We have a few handy aphorisms in place of metaphysics; for example, that commerce follows the flag. Recently, too, there has been a concerted attempt to spread the purer gospel of Nietzsche

among the English and Americans; and if our lack of intellectualism has made such a direct propaganda futile for the most part, the lesson, under the pious disguise of patriotism, has been swallowed with considerable avidity. Just now everybody is reading a little book by the late Professor Cramb, of Queen's College, London, introduced in this country with a laudatory preface by the Hon. Joseph H. Choate. It is called *Germany and England*, and consists of a series of lectures delivered last winter to applauding audiences. It is an eloquent and, in passages, a really noble appeal to patriotism; but the conclusion of the whole argument is a bold attempt to justify the philosophy of Might by involving the British sense of duty and trust in a nebula of German transcendentalism:

> Thus, while preparing to found a world-empire, Germany is also preparing to create a world-religion. . . .
>
> In Europe, I say, this conflict between Christ and Napoleon for the mastery over the minds of men is the most significant spiritual phenomenon of the twentieth century. . . . But it is in Germany alone that as yet Napoleonism has acquired something of the clearness and self-consistency of a formulated creed. . . .
>
> In the writings of Nietzsche and of the followers of Nietzsche [the Germans] study the same Napoleonism transforming the principles of everyday life, breathing a new spirit into ethics, transfiguring the tedious, half-hypocritical morality of an earlier generation. . . .
>
> Corsica, in a word, has conquered Galilee.
>
> And the future? All there is as yet obscure; but that

"empire of the spirit" will certainly be something of wider range, of indefinitely wider range than the whole of the confederated German world. . . . One mighty issue is secured: Germany at least shall not confront the twentieth century and its thronging vicissitudes as the worshipper of an alien God, thrall of an alien morality. Dazzling as Elpore with the dawnstar above her brow, the New Germany, knit once more to the divine genius within herself, delivered from the loathed burden of the past, the cancer of the centuries, confronts the vast darkness.

So much for what Professor Cramb calls the "legitimate impulses" of Germany, her desires to make a world-religion of Napoleonism. But what of England? There follows in Professor Cramb's lecture a pretty picture of England's willingness to embrace all the world in her empire by peaceful means, having indeed fairly had her fill of war in the past. But, he continues —

There still beyond the North Sea is the stern Watcher, unsleeping, unresting, bound to her own fate, . . . waiting for every sign of England's weakness. . . .

Whatever principle may govern individual friendships, alliances between nations and states are governed by self-interest only; they are valid only so long as mutual fears or mutual desires persist in equal force. For the friendship of nations is an empty name; peace is at best a truce on the battlefield of Time; the old myth or the old history of the struggle for existence is behind us, but the struggle for power — who is to assign bounds to its empire, or invent an instrument for measuring its intensity?

Now it is scarcely probable that Mr. Choate, when writing his introduction to these lectures, had in mind to commend so dithyrambic a sermon on the religion of pure force, or to uphold before American citizens Professor Cramb's identification of war with "the power which the spirit of man possesses to pursue the Ideal." His introduction, if it may be said with due respect, is just another symptom of that general distraction into which we have all been thrown by the conflicting voices of the age. We are caught, as it were, in the vortex caused by the meeting of two violent extremes, and the eye of the soul is made dizzy. For this is a peculiar mark of the times: that alongside of the preaching of war and self-justifying power, and above it, and around it, there has flowed an even more voluminous stream of talk of a very different sort, opposing to it the glories of peace, the beauty of social righteousness, the brotherhood of man, and the naturalness of universal sympathy — to Napoleonism opposing the gospel of humanitarianism.

There is no need to quote authorities or cite illustrations to show the prevalence of these humanitarian doctrines. They come to us in a thousand forms, and we recognize them under all their disguises. The main current of modern legislation flows from a principle of equalitarianism which is merely another name for a desire to

take away from the strong their advantage in the struggle of life. It would be difficult otherwise to explain the multiplication of laws designed to destroy the privileges of property and to intrench the privileges of labor; or to account for the many-headed movement towards eliminating any check upon the immediate will of the majority; or to interpret the swelling reverence for the word "people" as expressing an idea opposed to the authority of character and education. There is no need, I say, to particularize or to prove the existence of these doctrines.

Perhaps, however, we are not so fully aware of the fact that the home of Nietzscheism and Treitschkeism is also the land in which their contrary has been developed to the highest point in theory and practice. It is in German literature to-day that you will find the crudest, or, if you please, the most vivid realization of humanitarian sentiment. It was to a German woman that the Nobel prize was awarded for the most effective literary aid to the propaganda of peace. Above all it is in Germany that socialism fattened and grew strong, and reared itself as the logical and organized enemy of economic and military competition. In that land of intellectualism more clearly than anywhere else you will find the two philosophies, or ways of viewing life, presented as hostile ideals which draw the thoughts of men in different directions, and ex-

clude any sane compromise. Nor is it much of an exaggeration to say that where in other countries a spirit of compromise exists, as it does to a certain extent in the practical minds of England, this is due more to an unintelligent adherence to tradition than to a rationally discovered law of mediation.

No doubt it is a weakness inherent in human nature to follow the impulse of temperament to one extreme or the other, but it is a question whether the history of the past offers anything just like this utter opposition of current beliefs. To ask the causes of this antinomy would be to lose ourselves in a metaphysical search, insoluble perhaps at any time, certainly unprofitable here and now; but the falsehood involved in it is apparent, and some of its effects are easily measured.

Consider the extreme of Nietzscheism as it has been formulated in Germany. Against that shrill crying of the law of the jungle every healthy instinct in us revolts. War is not a lovely thing: it brings with it suffering and injustice for which there is no direct compensation; it is mainly the work of the demon of ignorance and destruction, and any people, or class of people, that identifies war and culture (or even *Kultur*) is living a lie. "A thing that is wholly a sham cannot in this universe of ours endure for ever. It may endure for a day, but its

doom is certain; there is no room for it in a world governed by valor, by the Will to Power." The words are Treitschke's, and they are aimed at what he regards as the sin of England. They are, indeed, not without their sting, for sham is the reverse side of that truly British form of opportunism which has built up an empire by obeying the call of the moment and looking for larger purposes after the event. But Treitschke should have remembered that there is another and terribly vulnerable form of sham, a cant of ideas, that may not endure over long in a world governed also by the Will to Truth. "You say that a good cause will sanctify even war! I tell you that a good war will sanctify any cause!" That is Nietzscheism. It means a fundamental indifference to the truth of first premises, which no logical straightforwardness and superimposed bulk of intellectualism can conceal. The result of such thinking is the invasion of Belgium, and the revulsion of a world's sympathy from the invaders.

Another result, or concomitant, of such thinking is the readiness of German scholars to send out justificatory appeals of a sort that are bringing a good many people to say openly what they have long suspected, that the hallmark of Teutonic scholarship is an enormous intellectual activity with an initial lack of intellectual integrity. That is one of our lessons.

But, on the other hand, it is equally false to hold that there is never a just cause of war. We do not think England was wrong, however much her interest may have been concerned in her righteousness, in arming for the revenge of Belgium. We do not think that France is wrong in defending her soil. Nor is war in itself wholly bestial. There has grown up amongst us of recent years a literature devoted to the propaganda of peace, both in the form of fiction and of exhortation, which throws into vivid relief all the horrors incidental to the battlefield, and slurs over or denies the honour and exaltation that are also a part of the soldier's life. That literature, I say boldly, is as false and mischievous as its Nietzschean antagonist. There is an element of heroism in war which, through all the waste and evil, has not been without its salutary effect. Is it because he has passed his life in a career entirely cruel and vile that the typical soldier, in his later years of retirement, is a man so true and honourable, often so gentle? Which of us has not known and loved the "happy warrior"?

> He who, though thus endued as with a sense
> And faculty for storm and turbulence,
> Is yet a Soul whose master-bias leans
> To homefelt pleasures and to gentle scenes;
> Sweet images! which, wheresoe'er he be,
> Are at his heart; and such fidelity
> It is his darling passion to approve;
> More brave for this, that he hath much to love.

Shall we, in our ingeminations of peace, forget all that we have felt in the reading of history, and slander our instincts?

Such, as I see it, is the falsehood that lies at the source of both extremes, whether of Nietzscheism or of humanitarianism. And the result of living in these extremes has been to make men the slaves rather than the masters of circumstance, and to fill them with amazement at the logic of events. Most of us in this country have little need to be warned against the falsehood of Nietzscheism; but there is a wholesome lesson for us if our present state of wonder shall bring us to reflect on the falsehood underlying the kind of humanitarianism that is everywhere poured into our ears, and on its consequences.

God forbid that I should be accounted an advocate of war! It is at best a bitter medicine; and I am of the opinion of the ancient Lydian king in his hour of defeat, who thought that no one is so infatuated as to prefer war to peace; for in peace children inter their parents, whereas war inverts the order of nature and causes parents to inter their children. These things had happened, he knew not how, by the pleasure of the gods. And so for ourselves, let us by every fair means endeavour to throw off this fatality that has lain upon mankind; let us grasp any honourable instrument that works for tranquillity without

degeneracy. But we shall not reach that end by closing our eyes to the light.

And first let us consider two practical errors of the humanitarians. They have not only wantonly distorted the image of war, but they have also tried to veil the fact that the sheer fighting instinct is still strong in the human heart. At the time of our dispute with Spain I chanced to be in a large western city, and I shall never forget how eager the better young men of that place were to enlist. It is absurd to suppose that they were much moved by pity for the Cubans, or to any considerable extent by the love of justice; they were carried away by the pure lust of fighting and adventure. The grey-haired lovers of peace should remember that there is always at their heels a generation of youth.

It is an equal error to believe that the cause of peace is advanced by flirting with radicalism, and accepting the protestations of the various socialistic parties at their face value. One of the most striking features of the present war, and to some innocent minds one of the most disheartening features, is the quickness with which the radical organizations of Europe forgot their platform of international brotherhood and rushed into the mêlée, each declaiming loudly, the German as loudly as the French, that it was going to shed blood for the advance of democracy. There has been a curious illusion, entertained pretty

widely by a certain class of pacifists, themselves not radical, that radicalism might be played with as a humanizing instrument, as if an organization which avowedly owes its efficiency to class feeling and in its class warfare resorts to dynamite or any other form of violence, would not, when its spirit of hatred was diverted to international rivalry, be ready for the same sort of weapons.

That illusion, for a time at least, has been shattered; but a deeper deceit has coiled itself into our hearts. Too many of the seekers after tranquillity and righteousness have been nursing the hope that they could counteract an extreme doctrine of egotism by opposing to it their equally extreme doctrine of sympathy — a vain and fatal hope. Two excesses in morality do not make a balance; two contrary indulgences do not result in self-control; two contradictory lies do not create truth. Instead of counteracting the egotistic impulses of mankind the preaching of an exaggerated humanitarianism rather inflames them and renders them more efficient. We may be sure, for instance, that Professor Cramb would not have spoken so audaciously and so acceptably before a London audience, had not he and they been led into extravagance by such talk of the pacifists as could be accused of sapping the vitality of the nation. And Nietzsche himself wrote with the avowed intention of

checking the strong current of sympathy for the weak, the unbridled humanitarian schemes of so-called progress, and the pacificism, which he summed up under the loathed name of Christianity.

And just as surely as a man who bases his conduct on sentiment rather than on character and knowledge will weaken his resistance to prejudice and passion, just so surely a false humanitarianism will not only fail to bring about the brotherhood of mankind, but will make a people more sensitive to the gusts of international hatred. Europe is now testifying to the truth of that statement. There is something peculiarly atrocious in the rancors of the present war and in the bitterness of the countercharges of crime. What Germany is feeling may be known from a recent interview with Privy Councillor Richard Witting, one of the leading financiers of the Empire. "I tell you that it is a fight to the finish," he is reported to have said, his whole body quivering with emotion. "God! how we hate England and the English, that nation of hypocrites and criminals which has brought this misery upon us and upon the world. And for what? For greed, greed and envy, to crush the German nation because England found herself decadent and felt her dominance and domineering in the world endangered." Or if you wish to know what the best Germans are saying of the allied armies, con-

sider these words in a letter from Herr von Brandt, at one time the Kaiser's Ambassador to China, now living in Weimar, a gentleman of the finest stamp and the most cosmopolitan experience. He writes:

> But against what war-devils we have to fight! From the small districts in Alsace the French have occupied they have carried away hundreds and hundreds of women and children and old men as so-called hostages, thrown them into dungeons and ill-treated them in every way. The Russians have acted still worse. They have tortured, mutilated and murdered the population; where they have passed no house has remained standing, or if one did it was so filthy that the smell was unbearable, and nobody could venture into it.

That is the German side of it, and our feelings towards her are of the same sort. We may be right in holding Germany responsible for the immediate outbreak of hostilities, and in condemning, even harshly condemning her conduct of the war; but there is nevertheless a touch of the irrational and the indecent in our frenzy of bitterness towards that country and in our readiness to gloat over every tale of her brutality. That is particularly the case in academic circles. A people to whom a few years ago most of our scholars were looking up as to the leader of scientific thought and education generally, they suddenly cast out of the pale of humanity; they mock its culture and deny its civilization. Alas, he who examines his breast honestly will discover that

no small part of that loathing is mixed up with resentment because he himself has been proved the dupe of empty dreams. Not the pleasantest trait of our human nature is its constant need of a scapegoat for its own sins and follies.

That is the discreditable aspect of our amazement; and if Horace is right in saying that the beginning of wisdom is to wonder at nothing, it would be well for us to cease being "stunned" at what others are doing, and to take thought to set our own house in order. Before the gate of the Paradise from which we have been ejected are flaming the swords of the two avenging angels, inexorable, whether we call them the nemesis of the gods or the law of nature. But the earth is ours, and the desire of peace still abides. Others may advance their practical schemes for securing the future peace of the world; one thing is sure, we shall not really profit from the frightful discipline of this experience unless we effect some change in our inner attitude towards life, and so escape from the false dilemma of our philosophy. As I have said, from one of the extremes, in its intellectual form, we may seem to be not so much in peril. But we need very much to examine the bases of the absolute humanitarianism that has won our tolerance, if not our allegiance. We need to be less swayed by our sympathies and more guided by the discriminations of reason; to put a harsh stop to the feminism that is under-

mining the sober virility of our minds; to control our equalitarian relaxation, of which recent legislation has been over full, by a stricter idea of the distinctions of value in human achievement; to be less ready to throw upon society the guilt of the individual, and to be firmer in our recognition of personal duty and responsibility; to revise our philosophy of emotional expansion, with its tendency to glorify extremes, for a saner perception of the virtue that lies in limits and for a keener search after the truth that dwells in mediation.

The whole matter can be summed up in a single word — justice. For justice is nothing but the balance within a man's own soul, self-imposed and self-sustained, the will to know clearly the middle truth between the philosophy of egotism, which declares that it is for the strong and prudent to take whatever they desire, and the contrary philosophy of equalitarian sympathy. Justice is the Everlasting Morality of distinctions and of voluntary direction opposed to the so-called New Morality of drifting.

I trust it may not appear an inopportune moment to talk of philosophy and these inner dispositions of the mind when the better part of the world is in arms for domination or self-preservation. Rather, when civilization itself might seem to be almost at hazard, then is the time to examine the ideas that have been swaying great

masses of men, both the educated and the uneducated. For if anything is sure in mortal life, it is that if a man thinks the truth, he will in the end find the peace of self-possession; and that if a man thinks untruth, he shall be a prey to the fluctuations of passion. And as it is with a man, so it is with a nation. We are all the servants of philosophy, for good or for evil.

THE END

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7-51